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HARPERS MAGAZINE

June 1925

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by IRVING R. WILES
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FOR THE GUMS

More than a tooth paste— it checks Pyorrhea

UNIV. OF MICH.

Drawn by John Alonzo Williams — Illustration for "Wild Geese"

"NOTHING WOULD INDUCE ME TO PART WITH IT"

Harper's Magazine

VOL. CLI JUNE, 1925 No. CMI

SELL THE PAPERS!

The Malady of American Journalism

BY A NEWSPAPER MAN

The author of the following article is an editorial writer on a well-known Western newspaper. He withholds his name out of regard for his colleagues, whose frank statements, along with his own, might be locally resented. The article undertakes to show how the modern newspaper, in its effort to achieve greater circulation, has lost sight of the aims and ideals which inspired the best American journalism of the days of Greeley and Dana.—*Editor's Note.*

THE owner, the editor, and the editorial writer of a daily newspaper of modest regional consequence somewhere in America spent ten minutes one afternoon last winter discussing a subscriber's order for five hundred copies of a recent issue. There were not five hundred copies left. The subscriber's check was of no great consequence, but this newspaper's clientele was sufficiently small for five hundred extra sales to mean something in circulation statistics. The informal conference was vainly trying to imagine where these copies could be procured.

"What the heck does he want them for?" finally growled the managing editor in the annoyed tone of a man to whom the troubles of others have been brought unnecessarily.

The owner explained that a syndicated column of editorial opinion, carried daily in the principal position on the first page—the most widely distributed and best-known offering of its kind in America—had published something which the subscriber wished to use as propaganda for his business.

The grave conferees scratched their heads and decided there was no possible way of getting together five hundred copies. The subscriber would have to be notified of this.

"Why not write him," spoke up the editorial writer with deliberate malice, "that we don't print Brisbane to get circulation but only because we believe every word of it?"

Did this take courage? Did lightning crackle on the horizon? Was the insolent young man instructed to stop at the cashier's window on the way out and draw his pay to date?

Not a bit of it! I happened to be the

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editorial writer. I knew my bosses' minds. What actually happened was that the two heads of the leading newspaper of a considerable-sized city and of a trade territory embracing three states snickered. Then the owner retorted, without rancor, "Gosh, but isn't he the sarcastic devil?"

But next day, when the universally famous column carried its customary sneer that Great Britain and Japan had deliberately hoodwinked us into signing the naval disarmament treaties of 1922 and were now deliberately cheating in their execution, did I editorially denounce the insinuation? I did not. On first joining that staff I had my experience with editorials rejected because they sought to debate directly with Mr. Brisbane; and no editorial writer yearns to fill his space quota twice. Instead, I remembered my standard instructions that, while Brisbane editorial policies are not necessarily our policies, we never weaken the prestige of a great circulation-getter by taking a direct issue with it.

Three or four days later I wrote an editorial, weakened in whatever effectiveness it may have had both by the time lapse and the "soft pedal," suggesting that evidences of British chicanery in the carrying out of the disarmament treaties was "hardly conclusive."

It may, or may not, make any difference what the newspaper readers of a middle-sized Western city and its surrounding circulation territory are encouraged to believe about the execution of the disarmament treaties. Time may prove Mr. Brisbane right. Nations may be safe only when suspecting the worst of other nations and, on the strength of that suspicion, doing their best to maintain dominant military establishments. Our newspaper's more feebly maintained policy of trusting—short of damning evidence of bad faith—to the decent motives and pledge-keeping instincts of others (as gentlemen are still alleged to do in private life) may prove, with Mr. Brisbane's expert assistance, to be the hopelessly impracticable ideal of a civilization too hasty in calling itself Christian. Newspapermen, especially those who must bear the curiously argumentative labors of editorial writing, acquire early in life the knowledge that all genuine issues have two or more sides.

The point, as this rather trivial incident reveals it, is that our newspaper is eagerly willing, with a cynical humor which quite appreciates what it is doing, to suppress its side in order to sell papers. The Brisbane column is a circulation getter. Therefore, our policies, our leadership (potential and actual), must be subordinated to Brisbane.

Here, in short, is a typical case of a newspaper consciously and cynically selling its soul to the technic of commodity salesmanship.

If there is a serious degenerative tendency at work in American journalism, despite still increasing standards of technical efficiency, such incidents represent it. In order to get, in the easiest and quickest way, the mass circulation which is the basis of most advertising profit, American dailies (large and small) are withdrawing from the market all of the useful services they have to sell except one thing—papers!

They could sell leadership—wise or unwise, but at least honest. Instead, more and more they sell flattery of the prejudices and puerile vanities of the herd mind. They could sell information. Instead, more and more generally they sell printed sentimental spectacles on a par with the trashiest novelties of the "movies." They could sell a criticism of life in all its common phases more constant and practically effective than the criticism afforded by all the arts put together. Instead, they sell frothy praise for whatever emotional project happens to have caught the local fancy, or the report that the descendant of the old Knickerbocker family has married a negress.

They could sell a sense of proportion in all the vast realm of physical and emotional complexities that properly concern the citizens of a self-governing Republic. Instead, they sell for months on end the idea that the charges and counter-charges of marital infidelity between a New York banker and his wife are the most important events happening on earth. They could sell a sense of the separation between matters of private concern and matters of public business. Instead, they sell the impression that a sixteen-year-old San Francisco girl's morbid pathological condition is the personal business, not only of every San Francisco reporter on the assignment but of every newspaper reader from Bangor, Maine, to San Diego, California.

They sell papers—more than twelve million daily in our twelve largest cities alone! But a managing editor of brilliant technical efficiency complained to me one night last summer:

"What in hell can I get for a head the newsboys will cry when nothing's coming over the wire but this Dawes plan ratification?"

A local crime story arrived in due course, but for the time being he had been sincerely worried.

I like to look back to our files for the early 1890's. We served a community of barely ten thousand then with six or eight absurdly undersized pages, much overcrowded with liquor and patent-medicine advertisements and county printing. Technically we were a joke. Headline writers ran their sentences together in the subordinate lines, ignored the "street sales punch" in the news. They often called it a day when they had written "Washington Dispatches" or "Telegraphic News" above the principal first-page columns.

Taste and finesse were lacking on the writing side, and enlightenment in many of our views. We were interested in Texas politics but the most effective device, apparently, the editor could think of for opposing James Stephen Hogg's campaign for the gubernatorial nomination was to make the inevitable pun on his name. Our opinions on "free silver" were for the whole decade more provincial than sound. Our manners were insufferable. To our opponents, journalistic or political, we granted only the occasional admission of their low cunning in crime and crookedness. We were crude, often wrong, and no doubt on occasion cruelly unjust. But two things stand out about us: we had a sense of proportion and we were not afraid.

Under those abominably written telegraph headlines we carried each day a highly compressed but intelligently plotted view of both national and foreign news. We might not have made such a splurge when a retiring governor of Kansas was arrested on bribery charges; but we gave a far better opportunity to know what the governors and the governments of other states were doing from week to week. When Wilhelm II discharged Bismarck we may have underplayed the event's sensational aspect. But our readers were told in a few succinct paragraphs just how this had happened and what it meant.

In our Washington news we were not fed one day on White House propaganda that the President will "press for" such and such a measure, and on Senate committee-room propaganda the next day that such and such a group of Senators will resist pressure. Instead, we were given a coherent account of what each public measure of consequence was about, and a brief analytical discussion, when the event warranted it, of the struggle over its passage. I can get a far more satisfactory idea from our six and eight-page paper of what the Fifty-first Congress was up to than I can to-day from our twelve to fifty-page paper of what the Sixty-eighth Congress is up to. Except for the fact that I was only a year old at the time, I could have written better informed political editorials in 1890.

In feature articles the improvement as we go backward is even more striking.

The syndicated mail correspondence of such journalists as Walter Wellman and d'Edmond was published in our paper almost daily. Almost never did such series deal obviously and deliberately with individuals or institutions of no consequence. Although Wellman and his contemporaries often wrote interestingly of the private interests and activities of the great and near great, the information which they gave almost invariably brought readers a sense of more intimate personal acquaintance with genuine public characters.

Bright little stories of White House cats and dogs may have been less numerous, but we had a truly better chance to know what our Presidents were like as persons. One came to know the Congressional leaders by more revealing traits than the fact that Senator A's wife bred canary birds or that Congressman Z's beautiful daughter was learning to write movie scenarios. Not that our paper maintained a mystifying silence on the love and cosmetic caprices of circus and theatrical stars—ancestors of the front-page raiders of Hollywood. But this response to petty curiosity was kept where it belonged—in little two and three-line paragraphs captioned "Jottings of Interest."

Biased as it sometimes was, our local reporting played up the projects and issues in which the community really had its stake—especially the controversial issues. The little spectacular insignificances which are the stock-in-trade of the modern newspaper as "human interest" stories were reduced to half a dozen lines in the "personal mention." Murders—and we had our share of them, since we were only a dozen years away from "wild west" conditions—were treated simply as exceptionally important police news. Even one or two done by or upon the first families, or possessing unusually spectacular features, were not displayed as having any more importance than the regular meetings of the city council.

Yet to-day I turn to our mechanically neat and professionally sophisticated forty-four pages and find that yesterday the most important happening on earth was that a foreign resident shot a fellow alien, probably fatally, for alleged indecent advances to the former's ten-year-old daughter. I find that Jack Dempsey has married Miss Taylor; that Floyd Collins' body in its Kentucky cave is not yet reached; that a French jury has acquitted an actress who killed her lover to spare him his "death agony"; that a woman has presided over the Nebraska house of representatives for one day (though not a word of what she or the house did is published); and that gifts donated to a prophetess of a non-forthcoming end of the world by her followers will not be restored by the courts to the givers.

So much for page one! We are a stock-raising section, or at least were until hard times afflicted the cattle industry. Since then one of our chief ambitions has been to see the industry get financial relief and come back. The Secretary of the Treasury yesterday instructed a member of the Federal Farm Land Bank Board to make an official investigation of the live-stock raisers' need for help and to make recommendations.

But to find this out I must turn to the third column of the second page. Even inside the paper it is considered of less importance than the claim of a "defense alienist" that a sixteen-year-old girl who shot her mother is insane.

How much better taste and sense of proportion would our newspaper have shown in displaying this in 1890, even though its headline had been simply "The Live Stock Industry." The difference marks with sufficient accuracy the change which has occurred in thirty-five years in the newspaper's conception of its function. In 1890 our paper sold information and leadership. This morning it exploited six spectacular but wholly insignificant sensations on the front page, and hid away the most significant story of the day on the second page. *To sell papers!*

The circulation manager, I happen to know, was delighted. So, under the spell of the circulation manager's compliments, was the managing editor. There is nothing quite so reassuring to editorial executives to-day as to have the circulation manager's approval; and nothing, as I have observed, quite so dangerous as to have an effective circulation manager's active disapproval.

For these are changes in motive which not only affect newspapers as physical products. They affect also the men who make newspapers. One favorite refuge from the growing puerility and bad taste in the profession is a deep and uncompromising cynicism regarding the newspaper's social usefulness.

"Look here," a small city editor of exceptional competence put it to me recently, "if you and I were hired to feed the animals in the park zoo, we shouldn't kick, should we, because we couldn't give them the same kind of eating that we have on our own tables? We'd give 'em the garbage they liked, and take our pay on Saturday nights. Well, you and I aren't hired to make the world a better place to live in, or to fight and die for noble causes, or even to tell the truth about this particular Main Street. We're hired to feed human animals the kind of mental garbage they want. We don't have to eat it. I don't read our paper for instruction or even for fun. I just read it for errors and to see if we're handing out regularly what the boobs like for breakfast."

Other newspapermen—and they grow more and more numerous among the editorial executives—find this explosively critical cynicism personally uncomfortable. For them the technical thrills of devising headlines and "make-up" plans which will most quickly seduce the greatest number of vacant minds into buying papers become the supreme absorption and the supreme professional reward. They do their work in the spirit of the Chicago "make-up man" and pioneer in the journalism of mob salesmanship, who would dash with a copy of each new edition into a neighboring saloon which employed a bartender of exceptionally low literacy. The editor would induce the bartender to read each story on the front page and then inquire if he understood it and if it interested him. Every story of which the bartender disapproved either went out of the paper in the next edition or on the inside pages where "the highbrows could hunt for it." This sort of facility to-day gives, in the average newspaper office, the first title to advancement in pay and responsibility.

Yet I believe that the majority of thoughtful newspapermen do the dreary work of catering to the lowest and most banal taste in their communities in the spirit of the small city editor just quoted. Either they take a perversely ironical pleasure in emphasizing the lurid inconsequence of their labors, or they loathe them with the peculiar hatred of men at once disillusioned in their jobs and bound to them by peculiar temperament and training useless to other industries. After nearly fifteen years of newspaper experience in all parts of the country and a fair acquaintance with the past of American journalism, I am tempted to the extreme statement that never were American newspapermen as a class so lacking in purpose or so contemptuous of their profession, morally and intellectually, as they are to-day when the technical efficiency of the press is at its height.

And this attitude tends to increase the very evils which are responsible for it. A profession that has no pride except in its technical adroitness, no sense of dignity except as regards its claim to be as irresponsible as possible, has no ethics, no courage, and no standards of taste.

I venture to charge that the lack of these things is in greater or less degree apparent in every edition of every newspaper in America. I do not say this because newspapers print crime news. Crime is properly reported as the register of our social—perhaps of our physiological—imperfection. To a less extent

the same is even true of certain types of personal scandal which may or may not reach the stage of court action. Where the press shows its lack of ethics and good taste is not in reporting but in *exploiting* crime and private scandal. Where it shows its lack of courage is when newspapers, whose owners and editors fully realize the evil, exploit crime and scandal with little, if any less, adroitness and salaciousness than newspapers which make a fetish of their efficiency in such performance.

A divorce case, for instance, develops in New York's so-called "high financial and social circles." It has only the faintest general social significance. But, from the first, such of this quality as it may have is utterly ignored or treated with addled shallowness. The only aspect seriously played up is its juiciness as private "society scandal."

The lower grade of newspaper readers enjoy salacious gossip about those whom, socially speaking, they envy. Therefore, for months and even for years one particularly risqué and protracted divorce case has *carte blanche* to the first page of virtually every daily newspaper on the continent until the familiar names of the principals, corespondents, and accessories become household words. The "conservative" newspapers vie with the sensational ones in obtaining inside information, frequently erroneous, by all the means known to evidence-getting detectives and expert procurers of scandal, however unavailable they may be to gentlemen.

The result, after four years, is not a single rational new light on the divorce problem but simply a further sharpening of the public's appetite for salacious social scandal; a sharpening of reportorial ingenuity in procuring it; a stronger editorial predilection for the details of such news when available; a stronger subconscious impression on the public mind that the Stillman case ranks with the great public events and issues of the 1920's. And—more papers sold!

There is a similar if less protracted orgy when a sixteen-year-old California girl kills her mother. There can be no objection to the simple, bald reporting of so unusual a crime and its peculiar circumstances. But, for as long as the public appetite can be coaxed with such tidbits, the press of the whole country (with a few honorable exceptions) offers every shred of testimony that can be legally printed as to morbid pathological conditions in the case.

The daily crop of headlines, the news dispatches, and above all the weekly crop of lurid "feature articles" carry, furthermore, the insinuation that such conditions are typical of the depravity of large groups of wild and jazz-mad young people. The pruriency of the lowest classes of newspaper readers is stimulated by so much feeding. The same lovely trait is fostered and encouraged by so much in those who have hitherto been relatively free from it. Consequently it is a fair gamble that the next story which commends itself to editorial judgment by its salacious background will receive an even more "daring" and more exquisitely detailed exploitation. The next movie scandal will be "juicier" than the Fatty Arbuckle case if ingenuity can make it so.

What kind of ingenuity?

Imagination can supply most of the details. But one can put it down among the self-evident facts that printable and unprintable information regarding a sixteen-year-old girl matricide's sexual experiences was not obtained by methods of which editorial gentlemen commonly approve either in their private or professional effusions.

For example, a Philadelphia reporter some years ago "scooped the country" by bribing his way into the Pullman compartment of the widow of the victim of a famous lynching—it was an "all-white" lynching—in the middle of the night while she was bringing home her husband's body for burial, and wrote a brilliant emotional story of her hysterical outcry when she discovered the nature of the intrusion. Such conduct

may be defensible on the assumption that the press exists solely to sell papers, but hardly on any other grounds. Yet the misrepresentations, the browbeatings, faith-breakings and practical blackmailing operations to obtain stories which have no other purpose than to exploit somebody's misery, disgrace, or depravity for circulation purposes are familiar to every newspaperman of more than the most rudimentary experience. And although some of the practices tend to become conventionalized, the evil grows rather than shrinks. It is the easiest way to sell papers.

Fundamental to the growth of all this shoddiness and cheap chicanery is a lack of courage. I doubt if there is a newspaper in the country of conservative origins—barring the *Christian Science Monitor*, whose peculiar clientele affords a peculiar protection—which has not in the past twenty-five years abandoned a considerable share of its convictions and traditions of good taste and ethical performance in order to compete with the "yellows" for circulation. If this had represented an honest change of convictions regarding news policies one could respect it even while deploring it. But too often the defense for such transitions is expressed in the whimper, "Our competitors play up that sort of stuff, and where should we be if we didn't?"

In news policies this lack of courage can be detected, as a rule, only by the more subtle analytical processes. On the editorial pages it becomes a public scandal to any casual reader of fair intelligence. Pick up nine-tenths of the editorial pages of the leading provincial newspapers in America to-day, and the first thing in sight is the editorial writer's conscious effort to bootlick public sentiment instead of to inform and lead it. Leadership is evidently the last thing in the editorial mind. The complacencies, the prejudices, the "hush" inhibitions of the herd mind in its warmest raptures of self-esteem furnish the leadership. The newspaper merely follows.

Take the prohibition issue. Rightly or wrongly, I doubt if there is an industrial class in the community so opposed to the Volstead act's interference with personal liberty as newspapermen. By the peculiar individualism which leads men to attempt to become writing persons, as well as by the convivial customs immemorial in the profession, they are predestined to the opposition. Newspaper proprietors frequently absorb some of the virus from the editorial side, and without having taken a census I question if any other group of capitalists includes a larger proportion of private plaintiffs against Mr. Volstead.

But when it comes to official editorial policies, in spite of the lamentations of the Anti-Saloon League, it is pretty well demonstrable that the press favors prohibition by at least as much of a majority as the country. Here and there, through random contacts, I know of a considerable number of newspapers which indorse prohibition with no more sincerity than the average politician or book-agent brings to the task of indorsing the looks of the baby. If such an experience is a criterion there must be scores of others in the same case. For every newspaper bought up in the bad old days by subsidized advertising from the "liquor interests" I estimate that there is at least one and a half to-day spinelessly acquiescing in prohibition, against the personal convictions of owner and editors, because of the "circulation interest." At any rate, half the pro-prohibition editors one meets in the West these days explain their attitude on no other grounds than that it is "good circulation policy."

Too often "good circulation policy" determines all policies. The overwhelming majority of American cities to-day are affected deeply by the absurd "don't knock, boost" complex—so exquisitely and unreservedly expressed by the motto of the Denver Chamber of Commerce: "I will hear no evil of; speak no evil about Denver." In most such communities the proper critical functions of

the local editorial writer are practically obliterated. A criticism, no matter how crying the evil — for instance, of the Denver police order that all white girls leave the employment of Greek restaurants and confectionery shops within twenty-four hours—is a "knock."

A "knock" is likely to be resented by someone who will show his or her resentment by stopping the paper. Subscription losses are circulation losses and mean that a year from now the advertising department may not be able to jerk its rates upward as far as had been anticipated. Therefore, praise everything in the local field. Flatter especially the pooled self-esteem, the provincial smugness and complacency represented in the "don't knock" slogan. Be sweet. Be as inoffensive as possible even in discussing national and international issues.

Above all, don't offend any organizations, however vicious, that have local strength. In Indiana, Georgia, and Texas in particular, the Ku Klux Klan has ridden into power largely on these and similar pious injunctions from editors and proprietors who, whatever their sins, have not approved of the Klan privately. In Texas, as I happen to know, one can locate almost precisely the cities where the Klan still holds political control by counting the newspapers which have preferred undiminished circulation to opposing it.

Yet degeneration of policy often comes eventually even to those newspapers which struggle against it. I could point to one newspaper in a large Southern city which, after preserving its community almost single-handed from the Ku Klux Klan menace and after conducting a sincere and gallant fight against illiberalism in theological, social, and industrial relations—all at once has unconditionally surrendered. Its last effort was made simultaneously against county grafting and deterioration of teaching standards in the public schools. The politicians, lay and educational, circulated propaganda that the convincing testimony produced in the news and editorial columns was a "knock" on the town and therefore was hurting it. By making it—especially among the city's several hundred school teachers—a point of "home-town loyalty" to cancel subscriptions, a temporary circulation loss of nearly five per cent was caused. The newspaper "quit cold." Its instructions to editorial writers now are to "knock" nothing locally but arson, murder, and burglary and to write on national affairs with such a balance as to please, so far as possible, all partisans.

One wonders, when one reads laments for the passing of vigorous personal journalism in America, if instructions like this did not do the lion's share of the killing. Where would Greeley, Bowles, Godkin, Watterson, and Halstead have been under perpetual instructions to "be sweet"?

One could not, however, have spent fifteen years in the newspaper business without recognizing the strength of the newspaper's alibi and the ease with which the sins of the profession can be over-emphasized. Bunking the public by the dishonorable exploitation of false values is an art neither invented by nor confined to the press.

The difference is that the newspaper does its bunking in the open daylight and in the most public place in the community—on its own front page each morning or evening where every intelligent citizen is forced to be aware of it. When the real-estate firm or manufacturer bunks a customer it is an infinitely more private and shady transaction. The newspaper's reputation for selling a shoddy product, deserved as it may be, is nevertheless thrown into unfairly high relief in comparison with the adulterating arts of those crafts of which the general public hears and sees little but the sanctimonious "ethical" resolutions indorsed at well press-agented national conventions.

Furthermore, the circulation urge is an instinct as vital to the newspaper's

existence as appetite is to the human body. Except for a very few newspapers with a peculiar clientele and institutional character like the *Christian Science Monitor* and the *Boston Transcript*, the press—under contemporary commercial conditions—simply cannot live and give the public any of its indispensable services unless it commands the patronage of a large bulk of the literate population in its community. Newspapers cannot be sold within range of the average man's pocketbook without deriving a preponderant revenue from advertising. Advertising cannot be obtained unless the circulation guarantees the advertiser an access to the mass of the buying public.

Nor can practical business men—who, under the present requirements of the press for elaborate mechanical equipment, must invest hundreds of thousands and even millions of dollars in order to own a newspaper—be expected blithely to risk such investments on ventures in editorial Galahadism. This might have been well enough in the good old days of local party organs which, though far from being Galahads, could afford to be courageous, rough-and-tumble fighters for definite convictions on an investment of a few thousand dollars. But it obviously has its limitations to-day, when it is as certain as sunrise that if one newspaper ignores a salacious scandal story from the motion-picture underworld, its competitor will capitalize it all the more in order to cut into the rival circulation.

Yet in finding an explanation for the evil we hardly find an excuse for wallowing in it, as seems to be more and more the policy of the press to-day. The essential need of modern journalism is to find an effective check upon it—a visible glimmer of the way out.

Newspapers—and one can count scores of them in recent obituary records—which simply wrap the mantle of their virtuous conservatism about them and lie down to die, certainly do not help to make these necessary discoveries. The need seems to be for newspapers which will begin by making courage, intelligent criticism, good taste, and informative service the criterion of every news and editorial policy; and then, instead of exploiting journalistic shoddiness, will aggressively exploit their valid journalistic usefulness. The present vicious circle can be smashed only when a few representative newspapers begin putting normally aggressive circulation campaigns into operation, based on the proposal that for every column which competitors give to the current lewd divorce case they will give a column on subjects worth an intelligent citizen's attention.

I recognize that this may be tooting the bugles to self-destroying heroism. Given the long and accustomed debasement of the community and its post-graduate education to appreciate only the worst features of contemporary journalism, a newspaper following such advice may go grandly into bankruptcy. But at any rate the profession, which has consisted chiefly of imitators since Mr. Hearst became its inspired circulation-getter, needs a few courageous leaders who will put these possibilities to a test.

We might find that we could do more with them than reason permits us to believe. On the other hand, if the American mass intellect has sunk to such a level that it will interest itself in nothing but exploited sensation and salaciousness and will permit no expression of opinion that does not flatter the prejudices and complacencies of the temperamentally thoughtless and barely literate, it is time we learned this definitely. Even newspapermen have a moral right to know whether in the future their profession is to afford honorable employment for gentlemen of intellect and independent judgment.

Unless by some newspaper's courage and initiative in the next few years the slogan of American journalism can be changed from "Sell the papers" to "We sell self-respecting papers," the answer is likely to be disappointing.

CIRCUS-RIDER TO RINGMASTER

[Casterbridge Fair]

By THOMAS HARDY

WHEN I am riding round the ring no longer,
Tell a tale of me;
Say, no steed-borne woman's nerve was stronger
Than used mine to be.
Let your whole soul say it; do:
O it will be true!

Should I soon no more be mistress found in
Feats I've made my own,
Trace the tan-laid track you'd whip me round in
On the cantering roan:
There may cross your eyes again
My lithe look as then.

Show how I, when clay becomes my cover,
Took the high-hoop leap
Into your arms, who coaxed and grew my lover—
Ah, to make me weep
Since those journeys joyed in so
Ever so long ago!

Though not now as when you freshly knew me,
But a fading form,
Shape the kiss you'd briskly blow up to me
While our love was warm,
And my cheek unstained by tears,
As in these last years!

WILD GEESE

Awarded a Second Prize in the Fourth Harper Short-Story Contest

BY CHARLES CALDWELL DOBIE

THE cloud that at noon had passed like a slow-moving black swan over the desert town of Mesquite, by three o'clock had assumed the proportions of a huge drawn shade; ten minutes later it was raining, and in another ten minutes crystal-clear again with the heat sucking greedily at every drop which a capricious sky had let fall. But the scent of moisture on sagebrush and withered stubble released a pungence worthy of a far more generous baptism. It was as if the parched country, yearning mightily toward greater refreshment, had clapped its withered hands together in a sudden delirium of joy. A little shiver of delight ran through the poplars huddled near the water-tank and overhead a mounting meadow lark laughed out a brief rapture.

Jane Bradford, locking the door of the sun-bleached school-house, was too late to catch the thrill of rain upon her upturned face, but the lingering ecstasy of the spent shower had power to set her pulses leaping. If only, like the meadow lark, she could have given voice to her joy or, better still, wings to carry it up, up, and over the crest of the blunt scarred hills to freedom! . . . But she was still too young to be cheated of all demonstration and, facing about, she ran swiftly in the direction of home. Midway in her flight past the station she halted; what would the inhabitants of Mesquite think of their schoolmistress? For a moment the question sobered her but the next instant she was on her way again, in full flight, the soft white folds of her skirt whipping the air with the grace of a bit of drapery from some Attic frieze.

She was breathless when she reached her door and glad of the shade of the cottonwoods which threw grave shadows across the threshold. When, upon the death of her father, she had come in from Saltine Valley to Mesquite to take charge of the district school, it was these two cottonwoods that had decided her habitation: they seemed like sentinels standing guard over the gaunt, sun-bleached house they sheltered. Citizens of Mesquite had protested her choice: a lonely cottage detached from the ugly ripple of the town was no place for Jaspar Bradford's daughter. But she knew better: if her imagination read security into the presence of two tremulous cottonwoods, security was there. They let her have her way, with the gentle tolerance of the West, remembering that the Bradfords had always stood apart from them, especially the mother; assuredly, the mother never had taken root in her adopted country and Jane Bradford's whimsy concerning the trees was not surprising: Mrs. Bradford had been like that—full of quaint fancies.

To-day Jane Bradford found these two friendly trees more gracious than ever. The sun had not yet penetrated their green reticence and, as a breeze swept through them, the ground beneath sparkled with raindrops. It was as if they had hoarded this moisture for her special delight. In acknowledgment she lifted her face to their cool touch, drawing in deep breaths. Would her desert-bred soul ever quench the thirst that

had been denied it? As if in mockery the same breeze which had shaken the trees free of their refreshment grew suddenly hot with the dry pungence of greasewood and stubble. No wonder her mother had withered under the desert's arid touch—a woman reared with the tang of sea-mists in her nostrils! And in the indignant heat of this reminiscence she pushed into the house.

Inside, the tragic memory of her mother still clung to her, reinforced by the two household gods that had made life tolerable for the exile. There upon the table lay the conch shell, brought by a great-uncle from some fortunate excursion to the West Indies; and on a narrow shelf, in a conspicuous place of honor, stood the model of the good ship *Ariel* with an uncertain history that made any glory possible: talismans which under the spell of intense and bitter longing so often had brought the cool ripples of an imaginary sea splashing over the moistless sands of Saltine Valley.

The air of the low room was stifling. Jane Bradford opened all her windows and a truant gust circling the four walls caught the limp sails of the *Ariel*, transforming it into a thing of buoyant and incredible life. The illusion of swift flight was so intense and startling that Jane Bradford clapped her hands together in a gesture half pleasure and half fear; for the moment it seemed as if it might elude her, as if under the spell of some desert magic it would sail off and be swallowed up in a distant and faint mirage. But the next instant the sails were empty and the miniature ship again floundering in a tragic calm. Jane Bradford's hands dropped to her side; she felt that something eerie and mysterious had passed her, and in a rush of motionless wonder she stood transfixed until the dim realization that somebody was tapping discreetly at her door roused her.

The knock came again, this time with a vigor which seemed to proclaim that the intelligence behind it had definite and positive knowledge of her presence. She wavered a moment, resentful of an irrelevant visitor breaking in on a mood so fragile and precious. But, realizing that there was no escape, in the end she threw open the door. On her threshold stood a strange and very self-contained man with a pale face and a crop of burnished hair which frequently goes with such a complexion; a male, still on the borderland of youth, in a smart tweed suit and tan spats—a thing as alien and foreign to Mesquite as the midsummer shower which had just spent itself, or the conch shell upon her table, or the model of the good ship *Ariel*.

He looked up with a twinkling glance and he said with an air of absolute candor:

"I knew you were inside the house because I saw you running toward it, not five minutes ago. . . . Do all the inhabitants express themselves so gaily?"

She colored. "It was the rain," she explained simply.

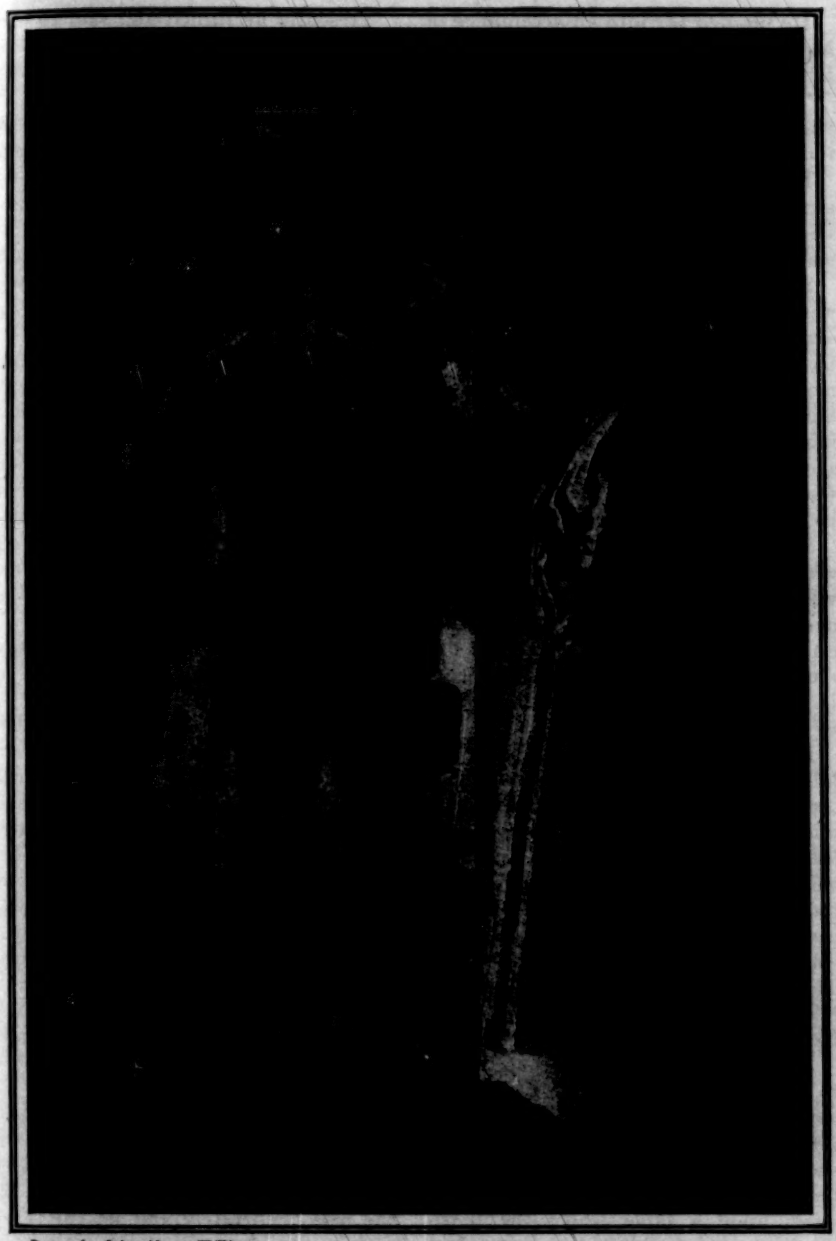
"Rain!" he scoffed. "You don't call *that* rain!"

"It's as good as we can do," she returned defensively.

"I hate to disillusion you," he ventured, "but it was a very poor performance . . . an extremely poor performance; the rain, I mean. You, of course, were magnificent. It moves me to wonder just how you would react to a cloudburst."

She decided to meet his impertinence seriously. "I'm not sure, but I fancy I should die of joy," she answered, looking at him squarely.

He slipped easily from the traces of her gravity. "Well, we'll not order a cloudburst, then! At least not until we've come to some sort of terms. . . . You see, I go in for death only as a last resort—after every other persuasion has failed. . . . I suppose there's no doubt about your being the person I am looking for." He consulted a card. "Bradford—Miss Jane Bradford?"



Drawn by John Alonso Williams

"I KNEW YOU WERE INSIDE THE HOUSE," HE SAID

He puzzled her into an acceptance of his banter. "No doubt that I know of," she threw back.

"And that you own a ship model?" She assented. "Well, I've come several thousand miles to see it."

He made this extraordinary statement in a tone as casual as if he had said, "I hear you have a room to let; may I look at it?"

She fell back a little, wondering if he were quite a safe person: madmen always had been one of her special terrors. But his auburn eyes glowed so mellowly that she decided to chance him. . . . He entered the room with the faintest suggestion of a swagger and she saw that he carried a walking-stick. A walking-stick in Mesquite! He *must* be mad!

She went over to lower the shades while he appraised her habitation with well-bred interest. She felt distinctly annoyed. For, back of the almost casual estimate of her surroundings, she could sense a swift and unerring discernment. It wasn't fair for a stranger to attempt to discover *anyone* so promptly.

But she forgave him once his eyes had fallen upon the model of the good ship *Ariel*. A sudden wishful light that just missed rapacity crept into his eyes; he leaned back on his cane with an air of weary skepticism. She crossed over and took the ship model in her hands. He caught his breath, as a hunter does who waits to see the effect of his rifle shot. Then, as she surrendered it to him, he released a long exquisite sigh of satisfaction.

For a moment he seemed content just to stand there in an attitude of intensive contemplation. It was her turn to hold *her* breath: she never had seen quite such calm rapture. . . . He moved finally and set the coveted treasure down upon a table where the sharp desert sunlight gilded it to a twofold glory. She fell discreetly back, watching him trace its buoyant outlines with a sensitive finger, almost as a blind man might have done.

Presently he turned and said to her:

"I've been ten months on the trail of this model. Tell me, how did you come by it?"

She sat down, motioning him to a seat opposite her. "It belonged originally to my grandfather, I believe."

He deserted his post with reluctance. "Ah, an heirloom, I see!"

She gave a pointed laugh. "Oh, much more than just an heirloom. It's my complete inheritance! That and a conch shell!"

He was on his feet in an instant, following the lure of her upraised finger. "A conch-shell. . . . How quaint! How absurdly quaint!" And with boyish eagerness he lifted the conch shell from its dusty place on the walnut writing-desk and listened to its imprisoned tempest. She smiled back at him as he laid the shell aside. He looked at her sharply. "The sea is a passion with you, isn't it?"

"Yes," she said faintly, turning away as if he had suddenly uncovered a weakness.

He resumed his seat. "Well," he began easily, "it's a passion with me, too. I come from Cornwall and it's in my blood. Matter of fact, I should have followed it but a lot of tiresome things interfered." He broke off and ran his lean white fingers through his red hair. His gesture was eloquent of defeat. "As it is, I can only play with the sea. So I run about the world collecting toys. It's great fun!"

"Toys!" She lifted puzzled eyebrows.

"Why, yes—don't you understand? Ship models—like the *Ariel* there—your *Ariel*."

She saw a sly crafty look creep into his eyes and felt the instinctive fear a mother feels in the presence of a stranger who casts covetous glances at her child. She rose deliberately and set the *Ariel* back in its place on the mantelpiece, saying as she did so:

"You can't fancy how fond I am of it. Nothing would induce me to part with it—*nothing!*"

She had expected him to be abashed by the vehemence of her outburst, but instead he nestled in his chair with an air of half-contentment and half-patience. It was plain that he was preparing for a long siege. "Naturally you're fond of it," he assented dreamily. "Who wouldn't be? Of course you know its history."

"No, and I'm not sure that I want to," she flung back, moved by an irrational fear that facts might rob her of right to its possession.

He opened his cigarette case and waited for her consent to smoke as he said blandly:

"It's what is known as a prisoner's model. A beautiful example of an English frigate done in 1803. It's got a sprit-topgallantsail that is enormously interesting. I've only seen one other of that period as stunning and that's in the South Kensington Museum. . . . So you see, you've really got something quite ripping."

She felt relieved: so far there was nothing in its history at odds with her rights to ownership. And it was intriguing to learn about it—made by a prisoner and all, the sprit-topgallantsail included. Not that this last mattered except that she liked the sea-going sound of it. She passed him a half-filled matchbox. He nodded his thanks and lighted a cigarette.

"I first heard about it at Marseilles. I was talking ship models with an old American sea captain who had retired and was being dragged over every Cooks' tour in existence by a chit of a granddaughter. He remembered distinctly seeing this model in somebody's home in Gloucester. He described it down to the last detail; there wasn't even a ratline missing. When he got through I said to him, 'I'm going over to Gloucester to get it!' He thought I was mad, of course. And as a matter of fact I was. Every collector is that and worse!"

He closed his eyes as if the very memory of his pursuit had exhausted him and she put in gently, "And what happened when you got to Gloucester?"

He revived languidly. "The usual thing. I ran around in circles. I talked to anyone who would listen to me, beat upon strange doors, frightened lone women half out of their wits at all hours of the day and night in an effort to locate my quarry. Everybody voted me crazy. Finally a deaf old fisherman gave me a clue. He'd seen, or heard, or dreamed about such a model, I couldn't quite gather which. On one point he was very definite: he was sure it had been shipped West—when, or how, or why, he couldn't remember. I made more inquiries. One fact led to another; people began to remember. I ended by establishing quite a case. At least I confirmed the sea captain's story; there *was* such a ship model and it had once been in Gloucester. It seemed reasonable to suppose that it was now somewhere in the West. But when I inquired about the West everybody seemed very vague. I discovered the West wasn't a locality—it was a state of mind. Chicago, Omaha, San Francisco—they were all West. At least they were west of Gloucester. . . . There was only one thing for me to do and I did it: I came West!"

"Stopping at Chicago, Omaha, and San Francisco?" she threw in with faint amusement.

"And way stations—almost all of them. But ship models grew scarcer and scarcer until I arrived in San Francisco; then things began to look up. I went around to second-hand shops and antique dealers and auction rooms. There were tons of ship models and other things. In fact, the other things were much more intriguing than their ship models. I bought no end of rubbish: egg-faced studio dolls; fat Chinese gods; a Russian icon from some Alaskan church; a fan that had once been the property of the Empress Carlotta. But one simply *had* to find an excuse for hanging around as I did, asking foolish questions.

"Finally, one day in a hotel lobby I met my man—a mining prospector cracked on the subject of ships. He said at once, 'I know where that ship model is. It's in the Saltine Valley. I saw it ten years ago at a farmhouse owned by a man named Bradford. It was so strange, stumbling onto a ship model in the heart of a desert. I tried to buy it, but it belonged to the man's wife and it seemed nothing would induce her to part with it.' And, would you believe it, he tried to persuade me not to bother further? He seemed to think that because he had failed, I should too. I never met anyone so absurd!"

Jane Bradford stirred, resting her chin—half reflectively, half defiantly—on her up-poised palm. His placid arrogance was enormously irritating and yet a certain admiration swept her as she said:

"I'm sorry . . . tremendously sorry . . . but of course—"

He cut her short. "My dear young lady, don't put yourself on record. It so often ends in such complete humiliation."

She drew herself up, looking down on him pityingly. "Ten months on a wild-goose chase!" she said with faint mockery. "It's too ridiculous!"

He half closed his lids and she could see his glance fixed pensively on his quarry. "Why ridiculous?" he drawled. "It's not on record that a wild goose has never been caught."

"Oh, if one had a lifetime, I dare say—"

"That's just the point: I have!"

Her answer was a rippling laugh keyed to a high note of derision.

There seemed no end to his audacities: point-blank without any preliminaries he said:

"Would it be too much trouble to ask you for a cup of tea?"

The prospect dismayed her but, remembering the simplicity of such occasions in all the English novels of her acquaintance, she decided that her austere pantry would yield that much hospitality. Indeed, she managed so well with her thin slices of buttered bread and her pot of strawberry jam and her brewing—at his request—of the strongest and blackest tea she ever remembered having tasted that for a season he seemed to be beguiled from his original quest. But when he left he cast such longing glances back at the narrow shelf enshrining the good ship *Ariel* that she felt all the delicious cruelty of a sovereign who could distribute or withold favors.

Afterwards, in the brief desert twilight, she recalled again the delicious thrill which had come to her on the wings of the places he had mentioned: Gloucester, Marseilles, Cornwall! Contacts—that was what the sea meant to her—a force which could touch all the far places of the earth: a fluid thing, changing, flowing, ebbing, without limitations; something mysterious and impalpable which the *Ariel* embodied. And she knew at once what the graven image of a tribe signified. The *Ariel* was her graven image, as it had been her mother's before her: the evidence of things that lay beyond reach, that always would lie beyond reach.

She remembered now that moment, years ago, when she first had seen this graven image of her mother's desire. She had looked at it with the dim comprehension of a child, unable to formulate her reactions, yet feeling a racial reaction stir her. Yes, always the sea had captured her imagination, yet it was not until her sixteenth year that she had had her first glimpse of it. They had gone, she and her mother, to a little white strip of beach lapped by the Pacific and her mother's joy at returning, even briefly, to her lost inheritance was moving and pathetic.

At first Jane Bradford had been disappointed, naturally; only a dull anticipation ever is completely satisfied at realization. It had been a gray-soiled day for one thing and the water had stretched out before her in turbid color-

less inertion—and this with her expectations keyed to something thunderous and glittering. Later, of course, she came to know its irisdescences; its purple and green splendor; its frothing gaiety; its sky-blue calm. A fresh revelation for every day, a discreet withholding of its infinite secrets, a thing synonomous with the perfect lover or the perfect wanton (according to one's understanding) until she grew to find it matching slowly, insinuatingly, all the brave things her mother had said of it; all the brave things that only an exile *could* say.

An exile: that was what her mother had been, what her mother remained to the last day of her life—a woman born with the thunder of the Atlantic in her ears and condemned to the dry crisp silences of the desert. She had followed a land-hungry husband West—he who, in the end, was beaten by the very patch of ground which he sought to subdue and capture. A devilish bit of ground that, rimmed in by blunt scarred hills and coaxed to anæmic harvests with the dribbling overflow of a slow brakish stream which somehow managed to survive the consuming heat. . . . Yes, Mildred Bradford had offered everything upon the altar of this adventure; everything but her child. It was as if she had set her teeth grimly together and shaken her fist in the face of the desert which she hated so passionately and said:

"You shall never possess my child—*never!*"

And so from the first she had crooned softly to the nursling at her breast, songs of the sea, "I saw three ships a-sailing, a-sailing o'er the sea"—these were the first words that Jane ever remembered hearing in a land of powdered dust and panting lizards and still clear noons.

Then later had come the stories—tales of the sea, pictures of the fishing village of Gloucester where her mother had been born. Gray, misty pictures; steel-blue, white-capped pictures; green-gold, sunlit pictures . . . drenched, drenched in moisture . . . cool to listen to. And finally the day when, in a package, had come from home two curious things—a ship model and a conch shell. . . . "I saw three ships a-sailing!" In a flash this picture ceased to be an abstraction.

As for the conch shell, Jane Bradford had held it to her ear while her mother had said:

"Listen! . . . There! Now you have heard the sea!"

It had been mysterious, this moment; and solemn—almost like a confirmation. It delivered Jane Bradford, somehow, from the sunburnt thrall of the desert and sealed her forever to the sea!

Yes, from that moment all Jane Bradford's dreams had the sea for a background with the gallant ship *Ariel* as her fetish and the conch shell an oracle filled with incomprehensible voices.

He met her the next day at the schoolhouse and walked home with her, swinging his walking-stick vigorously. He carried an enormous orange-colored box with a procession of Chinese figures waving banners on it. For a town like Mesquite nothing could have been more diverting. At her doorstep he said:

"Aren't you going to give me my daily tea?"

"Yes, after you've told me your name."

"Cyril," he answered dryly.

His reticence annoyed her but she kept her temper. "Cyril!" she repeated, with a little inflection of sarcasm. "You must be a duke or something."

"*Must* is a terribly unpleasant word," he flung back.

She replied by unlocking the door and waving him in; he handed her the orange-colored box. "It's one of those rubbishy studio dolls that I picked up in San Francisco when I was *doing* all the antique shops. . . . Of course I've no use for it."

"Is that why you brought it to me?"

she asked, wondering at the sharp quality of her insolence as she tossed the box unopened upon a couch.

He gave her a tolerant smile which immediately put her at a disadvantage. She took refuge in her preparations for tea. He leaned back, stretching his legs out languorously, and she could see that his lazy glance was fixed on nothing save the good ship *Ariel*. She brought in the tea and rattled the cups to recall him. Really, she thought, for anyone who wore spats and was named Cyril his manners were extraordinarily bad. He revived languidly and she served him a severe note of disapproval, hardening her upper lip. But he was quite oblivious.

She left her own cup to cool and went to the orange-colored box, snapping the cord which secured its lid.

"I hope you understand," she said disagreeably, "that my decision about the *Ariel* is final. . . . I shall *never* sell it to *anybody!*"

He made no reply. . . . She thrust her hands into the box and dragged out a lean, spineless rag doll with a vacuous face that somehow contrived to look disparagingly human. She gave it an impatient shake and literally flung it into a nearby chair. It sat up, leering at her.

"You didn't suppose," she exclaimed, "that you could bribe me with a thing like that!"

"Beware of Greeks bearing gifts: is that it?"

"If you want to put it that way."

He turned two eyes mild with reproach upon her. "That's a very ungracious speech for such a charming young lady."

He kept on, for an entire week, drinking her tea and carrying gifts to her: fat Chinese gods, a Russian icon of beaten silver, a fan that had once been the property of the Empress Carlotta . . . every strange thing, in short, which he had acquired in his quest of the *Ariel*. It was the fan that did the most to unsettle her: old ivory and lace with courtly figures painted on it. When she opened it a haunting perfume would fill the air, evoking dreams. This had been the bauble of a lovely woman and her personality still clung to it. . . . Upon the faded trappings of Jane Bradford's habitation these alien toys fell like jeweled beetles upon a dusty leafage. They were like a carnival troupe in flight, resting at a drab wayside inn. And the capacity within her that made sentinels of the cottonwoods, and filled the *Ariel's* empty sails, and gave an authentic voice to the conch shell, animating them with eerie life, welcomed them.

Sometimes as she sat opposite him, dropping the required lumps of sugar into his tea, she felt the whole incident of his coming and his presence to be a brittle dream that the slightest jar would shatter. She knew the neighbors were wondering about him, laughing at his ridiculous walking-stick and spats, but she had a way of deflecting their inquiries which they would scarcely have forgiven in another. The daughter of Mildred Bradford was bound to be queer, and so they accepted her with indulgence. But even if she had lacked reticence, how could she have answered them? Could she have told the inhabitants of Mesquite, "His name is Cyril, and he has come all the way from Cornwall to gain my model of the good ship *Ariel?*" Fancy how they would have received such a statement! It sounded outrageous even to her, committed as she was to phantasy.

But at other times there was a thin reality about him, softened by pathos which brought a little catch in her throat. "So I run about the world collecting toys." A thwarted desire lay back of this admission in spite of the air of inconsequence with which he carried it off. One day he caught a look of half interrogation, half pity which she had thrown at him and he tossed it back with the quiet mirth in his eyes. She flushed.

"I suppose," he drawled, "that my sort is new to you."

"*Your* sort!" she could only echo in her embarrassment.

"Yes—a man who collects things."

She met his gaze clearly now. "Not exactly. There's a cowpuncher over by Windgate who has a room full of rattlesnake skins. They say he'll ride a hundred miles to pick up a new one. I remember when I was a child he dropped in on us at noon one day and stayed to dinner. There was a rattlesnake skin that my father intended working into a belt drying on the wall. When he left, the skin was gone. He could have had it for the asking, but I guess he was afraid to risk it. I can recall how my father laughed."

He let the glinting light in his eyes smoulder. "You understand then that a man who collects things has no conscience . . . he stops at nothing."

She faced him squarely. "What you mean is that if worst came to worst, you could steal the *Ariel*."

He nodded. "Oh, very much sooner than that." He came suddenly to his feet and in an instant he was standing before her with the ship model in his profane hands.

A chill ran over her. "You wouldn't do that," she heard herself saying reproachfully.

He laughed and set the *Ariel* back. "Not until I've asked for it, at any rate. I shall be much more sporting than your cowpuncher. . . . Besides, it won't be necessary."

"Ah, you think I'm generous!" was all she could say in reply.

"Better than that! I think you're kind."

"I'm not," she said stubbornly. "It's ridiculous, your wanting it at all. You must have dozens of ship models."

"A hundred anyway," he cut in quietly.

"A hundred, then! While I've just got one."

"That's what makes it absurd. . . . Just one of anything is so stupid!"

His threat to steal the *Ariel* put a keen edge on the situation. She felt like a princess in a fairy tale with a magical possession to guard. And the two darkly green poplars before her door became more and more the sentinels she had fancied them, only now they were enchanted. But try as she would, she could not make a sinister figure of a male in tweeds and spats, carrying a cane, and drinking tea with her. And yet she felt him quite capable of turning thief, almost more capable than a cowpuncher with a flair for rattlers' skins.

A man who could travel clear from Marseilles, France, to Mesquite, Nevada, in quest of his object would scarcely be balked by thin scruples. . . . She could have dealt with a cowpuncher who stole from her in a cowpuncher's way: or, more properly, she could have turned him over to the community for chastisement, which held every possibility of an unpleasant and irrevocable dangling from a convenient tree. But there was something too grotesque and out-of-the-picture about a lynching party with Cyril as the objective. No, it would be impossible to deal in any such fashion with a man who ran about the world collecting toys: dolls and Russian icons and lace fans; who said, "I shall be more sporting than your cowpuncher."

When he came again he had a book for her: *A Hundred Famous Ship Models*. And remembering his words of the day before she said, "Your collection?"

He laughed. "I should say not. I've not a single example as distinguished as the least of these. But? I shall have *one* as corking—when I carry back the *Ariel*." He opened the book to the first page. "This," he said, "is an Egyptian tomb model and opposite is the picture of a Viking ship at Gogstad. . . . Norsemen buried their ships and raised a mound over them. Whalers sprang from this type."

She bent over the huge book, fascinated. He described the solid oak planking of the Viking ships, and the square-sail of flax and the dragon's head at the bow. These were the ships (he ex-

plained to her) with tents stretched on deck for sleeping quarters, in which the Scandinavians voyaged to pillage Great Britain, Iceland, France, and even North America.

"Great vultures seeking spoils," he said.

She shook her head and her glance traveled through the open door far beyond the hills that hemmed the Saltine Valley.

"No," she protested, "they're more like eagles to me—free like eagles!"

He kept his glance questioningly upon her. "Like eagles liberating a race?"

"Yes—how did you guess?"

Later came models with platforms raised for the archers. Her eyes glistened. "The beginning of navies!" she cried, clapping her hands.

"How quickly you see things!" he commented in swift admiration. "Now we've come to the point where trade is born. These ships belonged to the Hanseatic League. They carried furs from Russia: ermine and sable for kings' cloaks. And copper from Sweden and woven cloth from England."

There followed bulky galleons which had fathered modern battleships, and in their wake the famous *Henry Grace à Dieu* launched in 1514.

"*Henry Grace à Dieu!*" she repeated, midway between interrogation and pleasure in just the sound of the name.

"Gorgeous, isn't it? . . . Built specially to bear Henry VIII from Dover to meet Francis I upon the Field of the Cloth of Gold. . . . And here is a model of Drake's *Golden Hind*. And no end of Venetian traders. Can you imagine the treasure they carried back to Italy? . . . And here—"

She put her hand on his as he turned the next page. "Let's stop right there," she said, "at *Henry Grace à Dieu* and *The Golden Hind* and the 'Venetian traders.'"

She felt the fleeting pressure of his cool white fingers. "They *do* stir up beauty in a person, don't they? . . . But we're only halfway through. There is still Mr. Pepys' *Loyal London* and Lord Nelson's *Victory* and the Chinese tea-clippers."

"Let's save them until to-morrow," she pleaded.

He turned the pages back to the *Henry Grace à Dieu*. "Do you know," he said, looking at her intently, "that's the first time you ever asked me to come back."

Without answering she looked down at the stately outline of the *Henry Grace à Dieu*. If she had spoken she would have said, "But I wanted you." And in the flush of this realization her silence became prolonged.

The next afternoon when they had finished with Mr. Pepys' *Loyal London* and Lord Nelson's *Victory* and the Chinese tea-clippers she closed the huge book gently and she said:

"And, now, what about *your* models—the hundred or more that *you* own?"

He gave a deprecating laugh. "I told you yesterday they're not a patch on any of these. Simple church models and the like. Poor things but my own."

"Church models?"

"Yes, models hung in the churches for God's favor and blessing. You'll find them in all the French fishing villages. They make models of their sea-going craft and hang them from the church rafters. . . . It's a quaint custom."

She laid the book aside. "I think I should like your collection best," she said gravely.

His eyes smiled back at her. "Yes, I think you would."

"And if," she went on soberly, "I ever were to part with the *Ariel* I should like to think of it there—among the church models."

"Oh, I've plenty of profane types," he laughed. "They're not all such pious examples."

"It isn't that," she answered, "but the *Ariel* wouldn't shine in all that grand crowd." She pointed to the closed book. "It's a humble thing and it's always been in humble company."

He shook his head. "You're wrong. It belongs with the best. And in the end it will find it's level. As a matter of fact, I shouldn't be able to keep it always . . . it wouldn't be fair. My conscience would reprove me. Oh, I'll hold it captive for a while, as you have. And then one day I'll screw up my courage and place it where it should be —with the *Henry Grace à Dieu* and Mr. Pepys' *Loyal London* and *The Golden Hind*."

"*Hold it captive, as I have!*" she found herself repeating slowly.

"Yes, isn't it imprisoned here? . . . You're the only one who really ever sees it."

She stood up. "It's mine, isn't it? Haven't I the right to imprison it?" Her voice rose with helpless vehemence.

"No, no one has the right to imprison a beautiful thing." She had no answer for him and he spoke again, rapidly, pressing home his advantage. "I mean to be fair. It isn't as if I'm asking you to *give* it to me. I'll pay you well for it. Usually I haggle over these things. Not because I'm close-fisted but because it's part of the game; like bringing down a bird in a single shot. But you—I'm going to tell you right off what it's worth: at least a thousand dollars if you want to know. And I'm prepared to pay that much—now, this very minute!"

"A thousand dollars! . . . No, it can't be worth that!"

"It may be worth more."

She went over to the shelf and stood gazing up at her treasure. When she finally spoke her voice was brittle:

"I shall never sell it," she said, "*never!*"

He shrugged his shoulders. "There is only one thing left, then," was his quiet answer.

After he had said good-night she took the *Ariel* down and hid it, not in the least effectively but with a sense of taking due precaution. The room seemed positively empty. Fancy anyone imagining that she would part with it!—a thing bound up with every association of her childhood! . . . No, there was nothing that could take its place—not even the ivory-and-lace fan that once had been the property of the Empress Carlotta. . . . As for the thousand dollars, it was an affront to fancy that she would sell her birthright for such an obvious mess of pottage. . . . And yet, a thousand dollars might liberate her; might be the wings that would carry her over the rim of the blunt, scarred hills to freedom; upward as the meadow lark had been carried on that day when a truant shower had released a brief but violent ecstasy. This thought swept her like a gust, shaking her constancy. She put the conch shell to her ears and its voice was the moist voice of the sea, calling to her. And as she closed her eyes she smelled the lupines among the sand dunes, and heard the curlew's cry, and felt the cool spray against her cheek.

"The sea is a passion with you, isn't it?"

That was almost the first question he had asked her. . . . Well, he was offering her the sea in terms of a thousand dollars. Offering her the sea. . . . She listened again to the clipt voices that poured into her ears, distant roars, the soft plashing of water among the rocky pools. . . . Offering her something she already possessed—that was the thought which finally steadied her.

She rose and uncovered the *Ariel* again, setting it this time upon the table before her; the book of a hundred ship models stood open to the *Henry Grace à Dieu*. She would have liked to see it, this *Henry Grace à Dieu*, on the morning when it had weighed anchor at Dover with its courtly passenger list—setting out for the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Swords flashing from jeweled scabbards; wimples fluttering in the breeze; brocades and lace and laughter, perfume and ermine and sunlight. . . . And there was Drake's *Golden Hind* to scan again; and the Venetian traders and Mr. Pepys' *Loyal London* and Lord Nelson's *Victory*, and the Chinese tea-clippers. . . . What

processions and pageants and conquests they called up! And opposite them stood the *Ariel*, her *Ariel:* a beautiful example of an English frigate done in 1803 with its enormously interesting sprit-topgallantsail. A prisoner's model. A political prisoner? . . . a prisoner of the wars? . . . a prisoner of circumstance? . . . A murderer, perhaps—who could say? Releasing beauty; escaping upon the wings of creation to a truant freedom. Yes, it was beautiful, she could see it now. More beautiful than she had ever imagined, and it belonged with the others.

The realization came to her quietly, numbing her almost with its placid inevitability. It didn't belong to her; it never had. . . . She sat all night with that thought and the next day when he tapped upon her door she felt her heart stand still.

He said at once, "This is my last visit . . . I have come to ask you once more: Will you sell the *Ariel* to me?"

She answered him clearly. "No . . . I shall *give* it to you."

He stared at her. "But I must pay you."

"You cannot," she answered simply.

He sat for a moment in deep silence. "There is another thing I want," he said.

She rose with a fluttering fear. "Isn't one wild goose enough to capture?"

"One of anything is so ridiculous."

She could feel her lips harden. "My conch shell? No, you can't have that!"

He shook his head. "Can't you guess? . . . *You!*"

It was her turn to stare and yet she was not even frightened. She did not know his name . . . she did not know his fortune . . . she did not know his temper . . . but she knew her answer.

"I've a place in Cornwall—the sea laps it for miles and miles. And there is a castle on a cliff within sound and smell of it. . . ."

"A castle on a cliff," she heard herself echoing. "Then you are a—"

"Duke or something? . . . Does it matter?"

"No, it doesn't matter in the least," she answered.

TRAGIC BOOKS

BY LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE

THAT I have lived I know; that I
Have loved is quite as plain;
Why read of Lear, a wild old king,
Of Cæsar stabbed in vain?

The bitter fool, the Dover heath,
The stumbling in the grass
I know. I know the windy crowd,
And Rome as in a glass.

Life taught them all. These later days
Are full enough of rain;
I will not weep unless I must,
Or break my heart again.

THE WIFE OF THE TRAITOR

Portrait of Mrs. Benedict Arnold

BY GAMALIEL BRADFORD

IN one of the fragments of the old Greek dramatists a tragic heroine pathetically describes the contrast in the life of a woman tenderly brought up in her father's house, shielded, petted, protected from all shocks and storms; then suddenly thrust out, perhaps when little more than a girl, into the great tumult of the world; yoked to a man of whom she may know nothing fundamentally, and forced to take her full part in all the struggles and battles and miseries of life. It was an old story in Sophocles's day. It is an older story now. But it is a true story always, and rarely has it been illustrated with more pathos and passion than in the case of Margaret Shippen Arnold. She was gently, affectionately nurtured, if ever girl was. Then at nineteen she attached herself to the fortunes of Benedict Arnold, and few women, Greek or any other, have been more bitterly buffeted about the world than she.

The Shippens were a prominent family in Philadelphia before the Revolution, active in public affairs and much respected. Margaret's father, Edward, was educated to the law in England and was always supposed to be, like others of his class, reluctant to see a separation from the mother country. At the same time he was certainly not a decided Tory, resented the encroachments of George the Third's government, and so retained the respect of all his fellow-citizens that, after independence was established, he was made Chief Justice of Pennsylvania and performed his duties with usefulness and dignity. Margaret was born in 1760 and was one of a large family of sons and daughters. Devotion to her father seems to have been a marked characteristic of her, and we are told that in her childhood she made "his comfort her leading thought, often preferring to remain with him when evening parties and amusements would attract her sisters from home." Of her mother's influence or importance in her life we get no mention and the slight reference to her in letters of later years would not indicate that the maternal impression was very strong.

In spite of Margaret's taste for the domestic hearth it is evident that the Shippens were eminently social in their habits, and she was swept into the whirl like the rest. Both her portraits and tradition show she was very lovely, blonde, with a face that must have been gay and tender and responsive in every way; not by any means intellectual, but quick and keen and capable of mischief. Washington declared, at a somewhat later period, that all the young men were in love with Mrs. Arnold, and the disease seems to have been catching at all times. When the British occupied Philadelphia in 1778 there was an abundance of social gayety. In the wild farrago of diversions called the Mischianza the Shippen girls were to have taken a prominent part, but this was thwarted by their father's reluctance to have them appear in public in Turkish costumes. Major André, who was one of the organizers of this festivity, was on friendly terms with the family and at one time painted a charming portrait of

Margaret, to whom he afterwards wrote a letter from New York, with courteous offers of service: a letter perfectly innocent in aspect, and probably in intent—but in view of final events considerably suggestive of disaster.

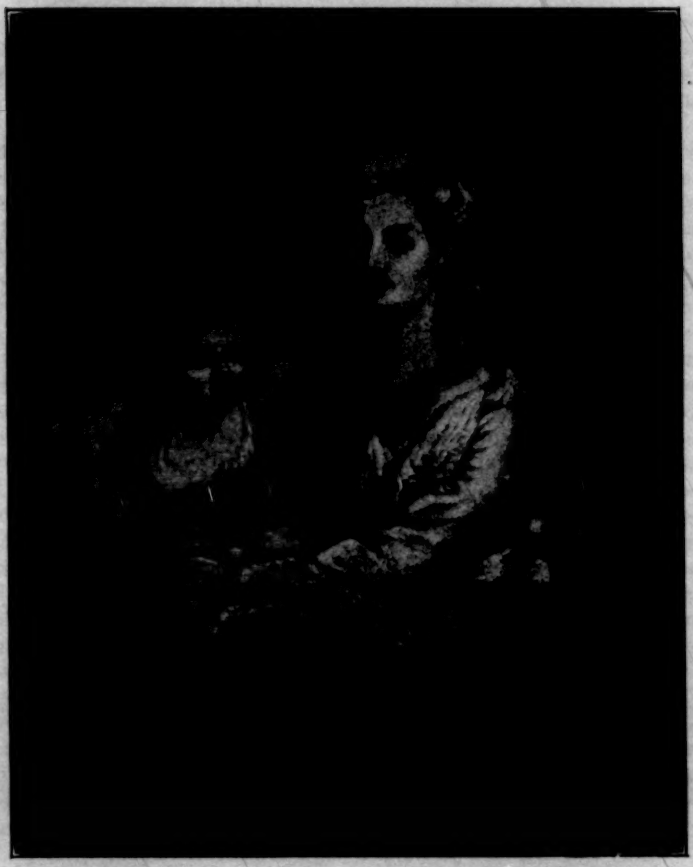
Then the British evacuated the city, the Americans took possession of it, and Benedict Arnold was made military governor. Arnold was twenty years older than Margaret. He was a widower with children. He was disabled by a wounded leg. But his quick, emotional nature enjoyed the contrast between the rough discipline of camps and the merry atmosphere of jest and gayety. Also, he was distinctly susceptible to feminine charm. Only six months earlier he had wooed—unsuccessfully—a certain Miss DeBlois of Boston, writing her these ardent if somewhat stilted phrases: "Friendship and esteem founded on the merit of the object is the most certain basis to build a lasting happiness upon and when there is a tender and ardent passion on one side, and friendship and esteem on the other, the heart must be callous to every tender sentiment if the taper of love is not lighted up at the flame."

Then Arnold came across Miss Shippen, was at once enchanted, and the flame which had burned so brightly for Miss DeBlois was soon transferred to the newer object. After a very brief delay he urged his suit, wrote a long letter containing the warmest expressions of devotion, and embodied in it various portions of the letter written six months before to Miss DeBlois—notably the above sentence, practically word for word. I strive in vain to picture to myself the lover's state of mind when he did this. Was there just the hint of a cynical smile about the mouth of the man of thirty-eight who thought he had learned what women liked to have said to them? Or did the rough, eager soldier really imagine that, having once hit upon the finest possible utterance of romantic affection, it would be vain to try to improve it?

And how did it all strike Margaret? That is what we shall never exactly know. There seems to be little doubt that her father was opposed to the match, as well he might be. Arnold was only a soldier of fortune, and the girl was a mere child. But fathers, no matter how much one has cherished them, count for little in such cases. Should not you like to have heard Arnold's wooing? Do you suppose it was in the style of the letter to Miss DeBlois or something altogether different? Mrs. Arnold's engaging biographer and relative, who has an almost superhuman gift for deducing something from nothing, proves Margaret's extreme modesty by the following sentence of a letter to Franklin from his daughter concerning his infant granddaughter: "You can't think how fond of kissing she is, and she gives such old-fashioned smacks General Arnold says he would give a good deal to have her for a school-mistress to teach the young ladies how to kiss." From which we are expected to infer that Miss Shippen was not an adept at kissing.

At any rate, kissing or no kissing, Margaret made up her mind to marry her middle-aged hero. And, having made up her mind, she did not allow a wounded leg to stand in the way. An eye-witness describes the wedding: "Arnold during the marriage ceremony was supported by a soldier, and when seated his disabled limb was propped upon a camp-stool." So, like the tragic heroine of Sophocles, this daintily nurtured girl took the arm of an adventurous warrior and stepped out into the wide, uncertain world.

And it was an uncertain world. Arnold's plans and status were far from fixed. He had not been promoted as he hoped, and his wound made a military career more difficult. At one time before his marriage he even thought of retiring upon a farm and announced that his "ambition was to be a good citizen rather than shining in history." It is



MRS. ARNOLD AND HER CHILD

(From the painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence)

easy to imagine how a farm would have suited Margaret. Instead they settled down in Philadelphia and led a gay and expensive life. Arnold liked the display and the distinction and his wife liked the fun. If they spent largely, the fault was mainly his. She was a child and spent what he gave her and did what he told her, no doubt.

But the money had to come from somewhere. Arnold got involved in hazy speculation, sure to be disastrous to a military commander. He was by no means popular with the Philadelphia citizens or with Congress, and he was shortly accused of dubious transactions amounting to peculation, and tried by a court-martial. He defended himself with energy and on the whole with success and was practically acquitted; but the court concluded that his conduct had been indiscreet enough to require a reprimand from Washington, which was duly though gently administered. It is easy to conceive how Arnold's pride was stung and how keenly his wife must have felt the affront and what she considered persecution.

The trial was completed in January, 1780. During the spring Arnold's

movements were uncertain and he was haunted by various vague projects. In March a son was born. When summer came Arnold succeeded in getting Washington to give him the command of West Point, and after more or less prolonged correspondence with the British, he agreed to surrender the fortress. In September Mrs. Arnold, with her infant, joined her husband. The negotiations came to a crisis toward the end of the month. André had his interview with Arnold and was captured on his return, with incriminating papers. Washington arrived at West Point the following morning, but not quite soon enough to intercept Arnold, who received word of what had happened and made a hurried escape. He was sitting at breakfast when the message was brought. He excused himself and his wife followed him. In her room he broke the news to her, left her almost distracted, flung himself on the first horse he could get, and fled down the river to the British. When Mrs. Arnold had recovered from her insanity of grief and bewilderment, Washington offered to send her either to her husband in New York or to her father in Philadelphia. She accepted the latter arrangement.

Such is the succinct, external account of the great tragedy of Margaret Arnold's life. But just here arises one of those puzzles which are the torment and the charm of the biographer's business; one of those problems which can never be quite settled because the data are not sufficient, yet must be dealt with and disposed of with some sort of conclusion, as definite as possible.

In 1836, fifty-six years after Arnold's treason, Matthew L. Davis published the *Memoirs of Aaron Burr*, relying mainly upon information furnished by Burr himself. In the first volume of this work Davis relates that Mrs. Arnold, on her journey from West Point to Philadelphia, stopped at the house of Mrs. Prevost at Paramus. There was some acquaintance between the ladies, Mrs. Arnold having already stayed there on her former trip; and as Mrs. Prevost was entirely British in sympathy, so soon as Mrs. Arnold arrived she threw off the mask, declared that she was weary of acting, that she had been all along cognizant of what was going on, and had even urged and persuaded her husband to the step he had taken. Mrs. Prevost—who was herself, by the way, one of the noblest and most charming of women—was afterwards married to Burr, and according to Davis, told her husband this story.

Burr's later biographer, Parton, repeats the narrative with considerable variants but without giving any authority for these. According to him Burr was actually present at the scene between Mrs. Arnold and Mrs. Prevost, and whatever report he made of it was that of an eye and ear witness.

Supposing we were to accept this story of Burr's as it comes through Davis and Parton, what would it mean? Here was a girl of twenty placed in one of the most tremendous tragic crises that could come upon a human being, exposed to the criticism of the keenest and most watchful eyes, and sustaining herself by acting—which, if it was acting, must have been superb. We have abundance of record from witnesses of her bearing immediately after Arnold's departure. Perhaps the account of Alexander Hamilton—who as a young soldier under Washington was present and wrote to his betrothed, Miss Schuyler—is the most vivid: "She, for a time, entirely lost herself. The general went up to see her, and she upbraided him with being in a plot to murder her child. One moment she raved, another she melted into tears. . . . We have every reason to believe, that she was entirely unacquainted with the plan, and the first knowledge of it, was when Arnold went to tell her he must banish himself from his country and from her forever. She instantly fell into a convulsion, and he left her in that situation." Surely neither Mrs. Siddons nor Rachel could have done better.

The same testimony comes from Varicks and Franks, Arnold's aides, who had even better opportunities of observation.

In view of this evidence, historians generally refuse to believe Mrs. Arnold guilty in any way whatever. If that is the case, what becomes of Burr's story? The explanation of Mrs. Arnold's ardent and affectionate biographers is perfectly simple: Burr lied. This explanation is carried much further into an elaborate development as to why and how he lied. It seems that a tradition survives in the Shippen family to the effect that Burr, who had long been intimate with Mrs. Arnold's relatives, offered to conduct her from Mrs. Prevost's to Philadelphia and that on the way he made love to her and was indignantly repelled. In consequence he invented the slander to get his revenge. On the basis of this vague legend the biographer weaves the most extraordinary circumstantial narrative of Burr's attempted seduction of the distressed lady—a narrative cunningly devised to impose on the simple as fact, but with no solid foundation in evidence.

All this mare's nest about Burr I instantly and totally reject, on *a priori* grounds. I have studied him long and intimately and in many respects I regard him with affection, in some with admiration, though hardly with esteem. His general attitude and conduct toward women was reprehensible beyond belief, and in a pinch I think it not impossible that he may have seized what appeared to him a favorable opportunity to make love to Mrs. Arnold, or to appear to do so. But that, no matter how this wooing was received, he should have gone out of his way to invent such a circumstantial story and then deliberately circulate it fifty years afterwards, I regard as too utterly preposterous to be entertained at all. It is simply out of the question. If I were forced to choose between the two alternatives—Mrs. Arnold's acting or Burr's deliberate slander—I should not hesitate a moment.

THE TREASON OF ARNOLD

Arnold is pointing out to the impassive Major André the advantages of concealing papers in one's boot.

(From an old print)

But I do not think we need be reduced to this. Independent of Burr, there is practically no evidence against the lady that counts. And as regards Burr's story, there is clearly the largest room for possible misunderstandings. Parton's and Davis's versions vary greatly (they both must have come through a considerable number of sources) and it is easy to suppose that Mrs. Prevost misunderstood Mrs. Arnold, and Burr Mrs. Prevost, and Davis Burr, and Parton everybody, as he was too liable to do. As I have said, the great body of historians exculpate Mrs. Arnold altogether, and on the whole I am not inclined to differ with them.

To be sure, she was very lovely. Washington's remark that all the young men were in love with her is not to be forgotten, and old historians are quite as susceptible as young soldiers. There is always Celia's cynical warning in regard to Nature's dealings with the fair sex, "those that she makes fair she scarce makes honest; and those that she makes honest she makes very ill-favoredly." If Mrs. Arnold had been old and plain, things might have assumed a different aspect. But what chiefly influences me as to her guilt is the inherent improbability. To suppose that the British would have actually carried on dangerous negotiations through a flightly girl of twenty is absurd. The most that can be imagined is that Arnold told her everything. But Arnold was a middle-aged man of vast experience. Who can believe that he would have confided such weighty matters to such a childish ear? He would rather have said with Macbeth:

> "Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
> Till thou applaud the deed."

The one thing to be emphasized, which is generally overlooked, is that, if Mrs. Arnold had been cognizant of what was going on, her measure of guilt would have been totally different from his. She was a child who had probably grown up to adore British uniforms and British society. Neither politics nor military loyalty would have meant anything to her. Her husband had been abused and persecuted and was at last restoring his allegiance where it belonged. The rest would have been detail. And from such a point of view her complicity would have been comparatively excusable, if it were psychologically possible at all.

I do not think it was, at any rate more than as a matter of constant, instinctive wifely pressure, if it was even that. And evidently her countrymen, from Washington down, were disposed to exonerate her. Otherwise she would hardly have been permitted to return safely to Philadelphia, or to reside there, even for a time. This she did. After a few weeks, however, people began to get restive over the presence of the wife of an avowed enemy, and in spite of Mrs. Arnold's offer to break off all relations with her husband, she was compelled to leave Philadelphia and take refuge with Arnold in New York.

After a stay of a year in that city Mrs. Arnold went with her husband to England, and from that time England was her home. Till her death in 1804 she kept up an active correspondence with her father and others, and from this we are able to get an accurate and varied insight into her character.

It is clear that she was by nature essentially and eminently social. Human interests, human contact meant life to her; and it was mainly as she felt these that she was conscious of living herself. She liked to meet people, she liked to hear about people, their personal concerns and daily doings; she liked to play a considerable part in the doings of the world. It is true that at one time, under stress of circumstances, she declares "my ambition has sunk with my fortune," but later it springs up and she refers charmingly to my "vanity, or the natural ambition, which I confess has often annoyed me."

This social and human interest is the more striking in Mrs. Arnold because there seems to be a conspicuous absence of some other elements. In her very extensive correspondence there is no reference whatever to books: the intellectual side of life seems left out altogether. Religion is there in decent degree. Almighty God is a social personage who should be considered, like George the Third; but the search for Him is not a passion in her life. As to the country, no. Her father mildly suggests living there: it might be cheaper. But rural economy and solitude do not appeal. "The country in England with a certain establishment is delightful; but to go into it with a confined income, unknown and unable to associate with the most respectable part of its inhabitants would be extremely painful to me and would be too lonely for either my dear girl, or myself." The notion of associating with trees and flowers and birds would be ridiculous. They have not clothes or manners or distinction, or even souls, and what would life be if one could not mix with these?

Nevertheless, it hardly seems that in England the social ambition was much gratified. In spite of the patronage of the king and of a few persons of importance, English society in general did not greatly relish Arnold's past history and kept aloof from him. The isolation that resulted is pathetically indicated in Mrs. Arnold's complaint, during one of her husband's absences, of being "in a strange country, without a creature near me that is really interested in my fate." It might be supposed that such charm as is manifested in the Lawrence portrait would have attracted admiration and sympathy. No doubt it did; but it takes more than a pretty face to break down the barriers of society in England.

Mrs. Arnold's intelligence may not have been largely cultivated in abstract lines, but no one can deny that she was quick, active, and energetic in practical matters. All her life she had sensitive nerves to fight against, and when the struggle came hardest she was apt to have internal difficulties to contend with, as well as external. In the crisis at West Point she was said to have been hysterical to the point of actual delirium. In a later crisis in England she herself writes that "for some hours my reason was despaired of." Yet there was the element of reserve, by which such high-strung temperaments somehow keep a hold upon themselves when it is absolutely necessary. It is at any rate clear that she directed her household and its affairs with skill, prudence, and success.

It is particularly interesting to follow her in money matters; for what concerns a wife and a mother more vitally than this? Mrs. Arnold has been frequently accused of extravagance. It is urged that her taste for expenditure and display was a main cause of her husband's financial troubles and hence of his ruin. Here again the faithful biographer does not fail her. Extravagant? Of course she was not extravagant. Over and over in her letters she insists upon the necessity of economy and her immense and constant efforts to exercise it. Her father especially commends her discretion, and in good set terms declares that he "never had reason to distrust your prudence."

This is all perfectly just. Only it is quite possible to be well aware of the value of money and of one's limitations in regard to it and still to spend very freely. There are, of course, those who squander with no discretion, and it cannot be for a moment maintained that Mrs. Arnold belonged to the number. But perhaps the most fundamental distinction in money concerns is between those who want little and those who want a great deal. It is only the former who are really independent financially and can afford to treat money as an indifferent matter. And Mrs. Arnold did not belong to this class. She liked pretty clothes. She liked comfort and ease and the good things of the world that are at once in-

dispensable and almost negative to those who are used to them. Above all, she liked to make a good showing before society, to keep up appearances. She was used to living like a lady, with ladies, and she could not bear not to do it; and it is amazing how much being a lady costs: "I am almost sick of the struggle to keep up an appearance, which however is absolutely necessary, in this country, to bring forward a young family." When you like so many things that cost money, you are pretty sure to spend it.

Yet however much she might feel inclined or obliged to spend, it is clear that Mrs. Arnold knew the value of money, how to handle it and to make it go far: hard experience had taught her so much. Also, she was a woman of business to a surprising extent. She gave a great deal of shrewd and careful thought to the subject of investments, exercised elaborate foresight as to the future, and her letters to and from her father are full of minute discussion of business matters. She was intimately conversant with her husband's rather complicated dealings. After his death she set herself with extraordinary energy to the task—which would have burdened any man—of clearing up the tangled relics of his estate, and the self-satisfaction with which she describes her efforts is not only pardonable but delightful: "I have paid every *ascertained* debt due from the Estate of my late lamented husband, within four or five hundred pounds, and this I have the means of discharging. I will not attempt to describe to you the toil it has been to me; but may without vanity add, that few women could have effected what I have done."

Mrs. Arnold's relations with the various members of her family, as fully developed in her letters, are always charming. Her affection for her father, and his for her, are peculiarly constant and significant. He writes to her at great length, expressing the deepest solicitude for her welfare, extending advice and more substantial assistance in liberal measure. The daughter's letters are equally tender and responsive. She longs to visit her parent, longs to give him the care and attention which his age should receive from her, to talk over her difficulties and get the benefit of his counsel. Margaret's letters to her sister are also attractive, full at once of cordial confidence and natural interest in family and friendly matters. Nor is she less sisterly or less dignified in her references to a brother who seems to have got into financial trouble and to have entangled her affairs with his own. But what puzzles me, I confess, is the slight appearance of the mother in all this correspondence. She lived till 1794, that is, for thirteen years after Margaret went to England. Yet during all that time we are given no single letter addressed to her. Margaret occasionally refers to her mother's health and inquires for her with respect; but there is no evidence of the dependence or intimate longing which one would have expected to find. What does it mean as regards Margaret, or her mother, or both? I wish I knew.

With her own immediate family Mrs. Arnold is as interesting and as dutiful as with her relatives at home. Arnold had sons by his former marriage and for them she showed a most exceptional consideration, thoughtfulness, and a really exquisite desire to do what was in every way fair and loyal. She looked after their material needs, advised them in their difficulties, and particularly mediated between them and their father when there was occasion for doing so.

With her own children, above all, Mrs. Arnold was charming—all that a mother could be asked to be. She enjoyed them when well, she tended them when ill; and when she was ill herself, her dread of being a burden to them was so great and her desire to spare them so intense that, in her abnormal state of mind, it almost drove her to suicide: "At one period, when I viewed every-

Courtesy of the Century Company

ARNOLD AND HIS WIFE IN LONDON

"In a strange country, without a creature near me that is really interested in my fate."

(From a drawing by Howard Pyle)

thing through a false medium, I fancied that nothing but the sacrifice of my life would benefit my children, for that my wretchedness embittered every moment of their lives: and dreadful to say, I was many times on the point of making the sacrifice."

She had one daughter, Sophia, and four sons. All the effort of her life was directed to getting these children on in the world and to giving them such training as would enable them to fill a distinguished station with credit and success. Here again, as is natural, the substance of her own ambition is reflected in her ambition for them. There is no hint of any intellectual pursuit or interest, or that any such thing as books existed in the world. There is no special insistence on religious influence, or desire that the children should do good or live to benefit their fellow men. Public positions, prominence in the army or navy or political life, social success and standing, supported by the solid goods of fortune and also of character—these were the sort of things the mother had always wished for herself: why should she wish anything else for her children?

And her wishes were gratified; and that they were so must, no doubt, as always, be attributed mainly to her effort and devotion. Her children seem all to have been profoundly attached to her, and she speaks repeatedly of the comfort they bring her, of her pride in them, and of the absence of anything in their conduct to cause her regret. When you consider how a hundred million Americans feel about Benedict Arnold, it is interesting to think that their mother could so speak of his sons.

For they were the sons of Benedict Arnold and she was Benedict Arnold's wife, and no other phase of her career is so interesting to study as her relation to him. First, one is curious as to his feeling about her; but indications on this point are difficult to come across. What is most striking in Arnold's English years is his silence. We have not one really personal word to show us what he felt about anything. Regret, remorse, explanation, apology, ambition, hope for the future—nothing comes to us. For twenty years the man's soul is hidden behind the curtain of oblivion. In the earlier period there are gleams of tenderness. Arnold's sister writes to Margaret during her husband's absence: "Yesterday got a letter from your anxious husband, who, lover-like, is tormenting himself with a thousand fancied disasters which have happened to you and the family." At the very end we have Arnold's will, and Mrs. Arnold is made sole executrix, which is perhaps as solid a proof of trust and affection as one can ask for.

The industrious biographer, always watchful and always logical, makes one of his remarkable inferences from a late letter of Mrs. Arnold's: "I sometimes fear that my reason will give way.—My sufferings are not of the present moment only.—Years of unhappiness have passed, I had cast my lot, complaints were unavailing, and you and my other friends are ignorant of the many causes of uneasiness I have had." This, says the biographer, means "the painful discovery that although her happiness had been sacrificed for Arnold, yet he had not always remained true to her." That Arnold was faithful I should gravely doubt, considering his character and his past; but I should want more evidence than the above to assert positively the contrary. At any rate, his wife does not hesitate elsewhere to speak of him as "the best of husbands" and to deplore "the loss of a husband whose affection for me was unbounded." I believe it was, and certainly it ought to have been.

For her tenderness and devotion to him appear in all her letters, though we have not a single word addressed to him directly. When he is absent she longs for him and cannot be at rest till she knows where he is and how he does. She hears of the capture of a town where

he is supposed to be and writes passionately that till she gets definite word she "shall not know a moment's peace of mind." But the most interesting and striking display of her feelings occurs in connection with the duel fought between Arnold and Lord Lauderdale, because the latter had made insinuations with regard to Arnold's conduct in America. Mrs. Arnold became aware of what was impending before the duel occurred and she depicts minutely her sufferings in connection with it. Anxious as she was, she yet thought first of what was due to her husband's reputation: "weak woman as I am, I would not wish to prevent what would be deemed necessary to preserve his honor." Yet the strain was hardly endurable: "What I suffered for near a week is not to be described: the suppression of my feelings, lest I should unman the general, almost at last proved too much for me; and for some hours my reason was despaired of." When all ends well and Lord Lauderdale calls upon her to express "concern at finding that I had been made unhappy," and some of the first characters in the kingdom visit the general to applaud his procedure, she has this charming word of appreciation of herself: "Nor am I displeased at the great commendations bestowed on my own conduct upon this trying occasion."

She loved him through it all, there is no doubt about that. But the question that teases me is, what she thought of him. Yet to get a wife's judgment and her intimate knowledge is always a difficult task. The instant anyone else judges or criticizes she leaps to defend, not so much him but herself, her judgment, her choice, her love. If you want to get the truth you have to watch, to divine, to develop with the subtlest care.

Such a process is immensely difficult when, as with Mrs. Arnold, we have only indirect and more or less formal correspondence. As to the one great event of Arnold's career, it may be said at once we have no word from her at all. What she thought of it we can only guess in the obscurest fashion. As to his later life, what is most interesting and impressive is her obstinate effort to defend his reputation, to see that his name was transmitted to his children without a stain or blot upon it; and does not this show that she did not for a moment recognize anything reprehensible in his earlier conduct? Or does it? To pay his debts, to assure his respectable standing in the world—for this she toiled with incessant, unfailing loyalty, and practically laid down her life. "I have rescued your father's memory from disrespect, by paying all his just debts, and his children will now never have the mortification of being reproached with his speculations having injured anybody beyond his own family; and his motives, not the unfortunate termination, will be considered by them, and his memory will be doubly dear to them." His motives, not the unfortunate termination—was it not thus she looked at his whole life? As she expressed it elsewhere, in connection with a specific instance, but I think certainly with a general bearing: "The solicitude was in itself so praiseworthy, and so disinterested, and never induced him to deviate from rectitude, that his children should ever reverence his memory."

So the loyal wife asserts, and perhaps believes, that nothing ever induced her husband to deviate from rectitude—and that husband was Benedict Arnold. And what strikes one most in it all is the frightful solidarity, the desperate identity of husband and wife, through heaven and hell. The woman was delightful, adorable beyond most women, and ought to have been remembered as such. Yet the one thing that causes her to linger in history is that she was the wife of a traitor. You may extenuate, you may mitigate, may emphasize her innocence, her grace, her tenderness, her nobility, her charm; but always when she is spoken of comes "Oh, the wife of the traitor, Arnold." What strange, involving, enduring perdition we unwittingly bring upon ourselves!

THE BLUE BEAD

A Story

BY ROSE WILDER LANE

WE never knew why she came to our country nor what her motives were while she was here. As for me, I do not worry my head about women. By Allah! a man has not spent his youth at the court of Abdul Hamid without learning women, and a story too many times told is a dish without salt. Also, I was not interested in the little madame. She was too thin. She walked like a man and it was impossible to understand the language of her eyes. If all the women of America are like her, *per Zoti!* I pity the men! No, I was not interested in her.

Nevertheless, her fate is interesting. Strange things happen in our mountains. One does not speak lightly of that mountain valley to which she went—the valley of Bulqis. You have heard of the dervishes of Bulqis, yes? How they listen to the silence, and see the unseen—how they travel without going? It is said that they—Ft! I am a civilized man. One does not believe such tales, eh? But the people of Bulqis are a very old people, the oldest of Albanians, and they have kept the old gods. Lek was there with her, also. . . . And Lek's wife was a girl of Bulqis. . . . It may be—*Per Zoti!* anything may be.

Yet if it were true should I not have received my appointment to Paris?

Understand, I am a loyal Albanian and an officer. But to die for Albania is one thing and to live in it is another, eh? What can be said for this Tirana—a city, a capital, with neither an opera house nor a covered bazaar? One dies of dullness here. Still, my cousin is the cousin of the wife of Azif Pasha, who is father-in-law to the brother of the Prime Minister. It is impossible that a man of my ability will be kept forever drinking coffee in this café where there is not even an orchestra.

But why should an American madame come here? Americans are rich; they can go anywhere. She was young; scandal could not already have driven her from all the civilized cities. But she was deep, that one. She lied with a skill which would have made even Abdul Hamid envious. Perhaps she was an agent of some secret service? Perhaps of the American oil companies? But she offered no one any money, and her talk of politics was all about Leagues, and peace, and land for the peasants. One would say it was the caprice of a woman weary of civilized love, seeking a new adventure. But—*enfin*, it was not that. Would she have chosen Lek, who is not handsome or rich or even the son of a Bey?

I was not interested in her. But, *per Zoti*, in this stupid village of a capital—! Also, I saw her first. Imagine: there I am, sitting in the guard-post on the Durazzo road, looking through the arches at white walls and minarets in the moonlight, hearing owls and fountains, and dreaming of the boulevards of Paris. What a life! Nowhere to go, nothing to see, no women— Even the noise of the automobile was a relief in that dullness.

It was not my place to halt it; I am an officer. But when I heard her voice I buttoned my uniform, gave a touch to my mustaches, and went out. She was

speaking English; no one understood her. The chauffeur knew only that she had landed from a boat in Durazzo and engaged him to bring her to Tirana. I commanded my orderly to bring a lamp and hold it close to her face, and then I first saw her irritating eyes. They were blue as the charms that ward off evil, but for the rest—! They were innocent, and yet not innocent; they were warm, and not warm; they looked straight at a man and smiled—but not as though they were smiling at a man. *Per Zoti!* I had not seen a woman like that. Her face had not the softness of the Italian or the shrewdness of the French or the bleakness of the English. There was something Slav in it; I spoke to her first in Serbian, then in German, and she said, "*Parlez-vous français, monsieur?*"

"I am American," she said.

You may imagine that I was gallant; I am an officer and I know women, eh? It appeared that she knew no one in Tirana; she inquired about a hotel. I ask you, what would one suppose from that? In mere courtesy, *entendu*, I was ready to accompany her, to make all arrangements, to offer her a little supper. I thought rapidly of kicking the servants awake and having something prepared. Even in Tirana it would be possible, and my orderly could borrow the wine from a brother officer; it would be a joke on him later.

She refused, warmly. "Thank you, monsieur, you are very kind. No, no, thank you. I will not trouble you." One would have thought she meant the words. Ah, but she was subtle!

I could only take her passport and let her go.

The passport was in English; I could make nothing of it. After we had all examined it, over in the officer's mess, we thought of Lek who had been educated in England. It was then past midnight but we sent a corporal and four soldiers to bring him. You perceive it was business of state. Also, Lek was nobody. His father had been a rich merchant of Kossova, but they were ruined by the Serbs. Lek was a little man, not handsome, not very strong; his health had been broken in Serbian prisons during the wars. He was of no consequence whatever. The soldiers brought him in.

You may imagine with what suspense, as patriots, we watched him read the passport. But he could tell us very little. It appeared that she was—or had been—married, but there was nothing said about her husband. She was a writer, it said. A woman, and a journalist? Impossible. Perhaps a poet. By studying the visas we learned that she had been traveling quite rapidly for three years, throughout Europe and even into Russia. This traveling must have consumed a fortune; evidently her family was wealthy or she had an income from some secret source.

"Or perhaps—" said Captain Koleka, "a young woman, traveling alone, and pretty—?" He said the rest with his eyebrow, like an Italian.

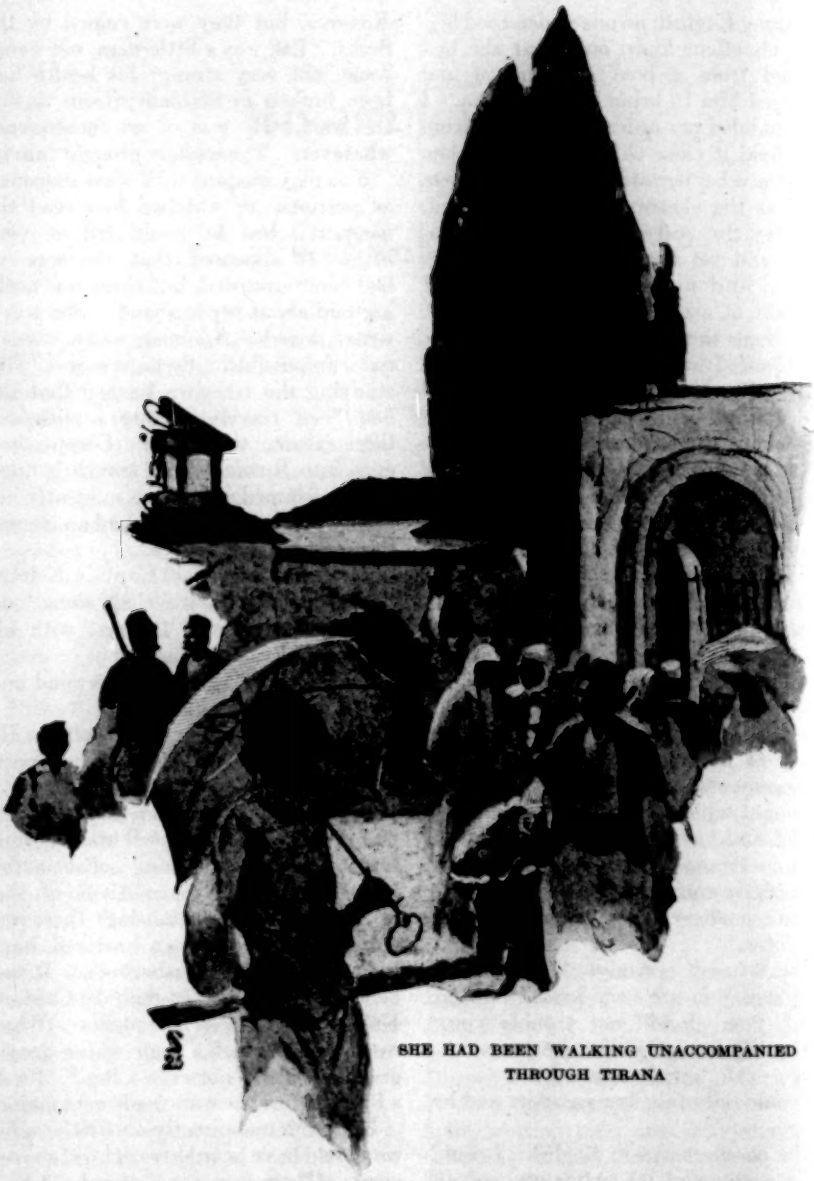
"So?" said I, in a way to remind him that I am a major.

"Ah, you think her pretty, eh?" He gazed at the photograph on the passport.

I took the passport from him.

It was my duty to return it to madame, was it not? In any case it was my custom to take my morning coffee in the Hotel Europa. The motives of the others were obvious, amusing; there was not a vacant table when I arrived, having been delayed at the barber's. It was beneath my dignity to reply to Captain Koleka's remarks on my entrance. What can one expect of a man whose great-grandfather was not even a Bey? I was a Pasha before the wars made me a major.

Her room was directly above the café; we should have heard her slightest movement. There was not a sound. I had drunk no less than seven coffees with the Ministers at my table before she appeared. She came from the street. If it can be imagined she had been walking all that time, unaccompanied, in the streets of Tirana. What could be her motive?



SHE HAD BEEN WALKING UNACCOMPANIED THROUGH TIRANA

She stood in the arch of the doorway, her eyes confused by the dimness after the white sunshine of the street behind her. I have said that she was thin? She lacked the chic of the Parisian, without doubt. Her shoes were hideous—like a man's shoes. Her ankles were slim. She wore a costume of heavy white linen, no gloves, a small black hat. A white blouse, buttoned to the chin, covered and revealed the curves of her neck. She carried a purple parasol and this made a glow about her. For a moment her cheeks appeared rosy, then she closed the

parasol and we saw that they were pale and sprinkled with freckles. No rouge, no lip-stick, no accent of black for the eyes—oh, a truly insolent disregard of all that makes feminine charm! Yet there was an air about her—indescribable.

She walked alone past the tables, neither slowly nor with haste, as though the room were empty. It chanced that the Ministers and I were nearest the stairs that led to her room. As she approached I rose, bowed.

"Madame, will you permit me to inquire whether everything possible has been done for your comfort, and to assure you that a humble major of the army of the republic is entirely at your service?"

Naturally, she remembered me. Trust the ladies to have an eye for a handsome officer, eh? She held out her hand and I was bending to kiss it—unperfumed and ringless as it was—when she gripped my fingers and took her hand away. Why should she insult me thus? It was part of her whole inexplicable conduct. She said, "Monsieur the major, you are more than kind. I should, in fact, like to ask you—"

I could only repeat, "At your service, madame."

"I haven't an interpreter yet, and I'm so hungry," she said. Imagine! She continued, "Would you tell the waiter that what I want is grilled bread and boiled eggs? I couldn't make him understand."

I am not one to lose my head in a situation. I presented her to the Ministers, gave her a chair at our table, and made it appear mere hospitality to humor her fantastic wishes. But the fact remained that she had insolently replied to my courtesy by attempting to place me—an officer!—in the position of a *kavass*.

Why? How can I say? From first to last she was inexplicable. She demanded food, at that hour, as though she were starving. She had no *kavass*, no servant at all, yet she gave the waiter a krone for himself and she talked to the Ministers as though she were their equal. She asked the Minister of Agriculture questions which only a peasant could answer. Of herself she said that she was a writer —*une écrivaine américaine*.

We could make nothing of her.

"What journal do you represent, madame?" She replied brazenly that she was not a journalist.

"I write for the American reviews," she said, yet she did not represent any review. "I write books." Then she must have money, for it costs much money to pay for printing a book. Yet she continued to have no servants. She carried packages from the bazaars in her own hands, like a peasant.

We saw her going about the streets, walking in and out of Government House. She went to the offices of the Ministers, accepted their coffee and cigarettes, and —asked them questions! It was evident that she should be watched and, as she desired an interpreter, I offered to get one immediately. It was my intention to send for the grandson of my great-uncle, the renowned Djemil Pasha, then in Salonika. He could be trusted to watch her, and thus I would place both him and the government under an obligation to me. In the meantime we were more than courteous to the little madame, and she was more than subtle, looking at us with those irritating blue eyes and saying, "Thank you, thank you, monsieur." And hardly ten days had elapsed when we saw her going everywhere with Lek.

Can you conceive it, with Lek, who was nobody! who was not even handsome.

"Thank you so much, monsieur the major," she said to me, smiling, "but you need not trouble any more about an interpreter for me."

You comprehend it was not that I was interested in one so thin. Yet it is true that the other officers pretended to jeer at me about that little madame's so-called interpreter.

For consider, does one walk side by side with an interpreter, a *kavass*, in the public streets? Does one walk with him

alone into the country? Does one drink coffee with him, sit with him among the gypsies, join common soldiers by the roadsides, spend even days with him in peasant villages? Does one stroll with him under the moon in this town where there is nothing to see? We came upon them standing still, pretending to stare at—nothing. The moonlight, the arcades, the minarets, and cypresses. Pah!

"You find Lek to your taste, madame?" I said to her with an irony which she affected to ignore.

"He is an excellent interpreter," she said, "and a true gentleman."

He had lied to her. "You have been deceived, madame," said I. "His father was not even a Bey; he was a ruined merchant."

"Yes," she said. "He told me." And she spoke of the loss of Kossova, and of our relations with Serbia. She affected interest in these questions which concern only men and soldiers.

She irritated one to brutality. "Why do you stay here, madame?" I asked her.

"It is so beautiful!" she preposterously replied, "and I love the Albanians." Ah! "The peasants and the soldiers, the people," she went on. "Do you realize how wonderful they are, how honorable, how brave, how kind? And their stories, their songs—You have a native art here, a living mythology."

She would flatter me, you perceive, by flattering my country: thinking I knew nothing better. "Albania is not civilized, madame," I said. "I know Paris, madame; I know Vienna, Rome—the great world. There is nothing here. Ah, to hear music once more!" I hummed a strain of "*Un Peu d'Amour.*" At this moment Captain Koleka entered the café, which had chanced to be empty. He entered to hear me singing to her and to see her warmly greet Lek and go away with him. The opinion of a low-born captain can be of no interest to me.

Then we learned that she wished to go to the mountains. Lek was going with her. He was asking permission from the government, and hiring a pack-mule. They were going to walk, *per Zoti!* Imagine, to walk! Like peasants. It was known that if she wished a little journey *á deux* I could have taken her to Korca itself, in the fine carriage belonging to the father of my brother-in-law. Why, in the name of the Prophet, should she choose to walk with Lek in the mountains?

A man of my position naturally does not make an equal of a man like Lek. Nevertheless, that evening in the café I spoke to him. "What attraction has that little madame?" I said with contempt. "*Per Zoti!* she is too thin. A man likes a woman to be an armful."

The little bantam tried to stand up to me like a fighting cock. "The women of America are different; they talk with men like men. I will not discuss madame with you."

I recognized this insolence with no more than a look. But he did not get permission for that journey. Indeed, should I concern myself about his small affairs?

Meanwhile, madame would listen to no reason. In vain we told her that walking was hard in the mountains, that the life was savage, that she would meet only peasants. No one went to the mountains. Why should she wish to go? Perhaps she was acting from pique? As we say, only the spoon knows what is in the dish. She might imagine that she was pricking me with jealousy, that little dagger of the subtle woman. I jealous of Lek? I admit the idea amused me. Still, I am not one to disappoint the ladies, eh?

One could find her in the afternoons sitting at a table under the arcade of the café, writing in a small book or merely looking out at the painted mosque and the peasants by the fountain. She would look at them for hours, thinking—who knows what? It is incredible that she could always have been thinking of that little Lek. Yet she kept always between us that barrier of talk—about politics, about land, about peasants—meaningless talk. Undoubtedly it was coquetry.

So one afternoon I said to her—it does not matter what. The usual things. Yet with a delicacy, I assure you—with a sincerity, with a fervor!

She laughed. "Ah, monsieur the major, you don't expect me to take you seriously!" I assure you her blue eyes had nothing in them but laughter. What a creature! "Come, tell me," she said, "Who is that beautiful woman, all in red and gold, looking at us?"

Many thoughts came into my head. The woman was the mother of Lek. I asked myself, why does Lek refuse to speak frankly of this little madame, as a man among men in the café? It is evident what she is; he does not present her to his family. I said, "She is a mountain woman."

The mother of Lek came toward us. Madame continued to speak of her beauty, of her manner of walking, of her marvelous garments. As for that, the woman was old, she walked like any mountain woman, and her clothes were the cheapest of silks, woven and dyed by peasant women. It is true that she wore a considerable dowry of gold coins in her headdress and on her breast. "She must be the wife of a chief," said madame.

"Is this the woman from a foreign land who has bewitched my son?" said Lek's mother, looking at madame.

Madame exclaimed, "What does she say? Tell me what she says! Please!"

I forget what I replied. We sat at that little table in the shadow of the arcade and the mother of Lek remained standing by the flowing water of the gutter, under the plane trees. She said to madame, "Go back to your own country. Why do you come here to set your spell upon my only son?"

"What does she say?" madame repeated.

"She asks why you come to this country."

"Because it is so beautiful," madame replied, as senselessly as always. "Tell her I love the people, their songs, their stories. Tell her I am going to the mountains. Where does she come from in the mountains?"

Am I a *kavass?*

"Madame is going to the mountains with your son," I said to the mother of Lek.

"Why does she look at me like that?" madame exclaimed.

The mother of Lek came closer, walking through the flowing water. "Go away," she said to madame. "Leave my son with his wife, who is carrying his son in her body. Go away. I am a woman of Kossova, I do not beg. I tell you—go away."

There was madame, demanding to be told what she said.

"She warns you not to go to the mountains. She says they are dangerous."

It was amusing to hear madame talking her absurdities. But was it my place to interpret them? "Enough!" I said to the mother of Lek. "Madame will do as she chooses. Go!" After all, I am an officer.

"She walks like a goddess," said madame, watching the woman go. "But why should she be angry?" Then she thanked me.

I rose and bowed. "A pleasure, madame. It is too great an honor to be permitted to be madame's servant."

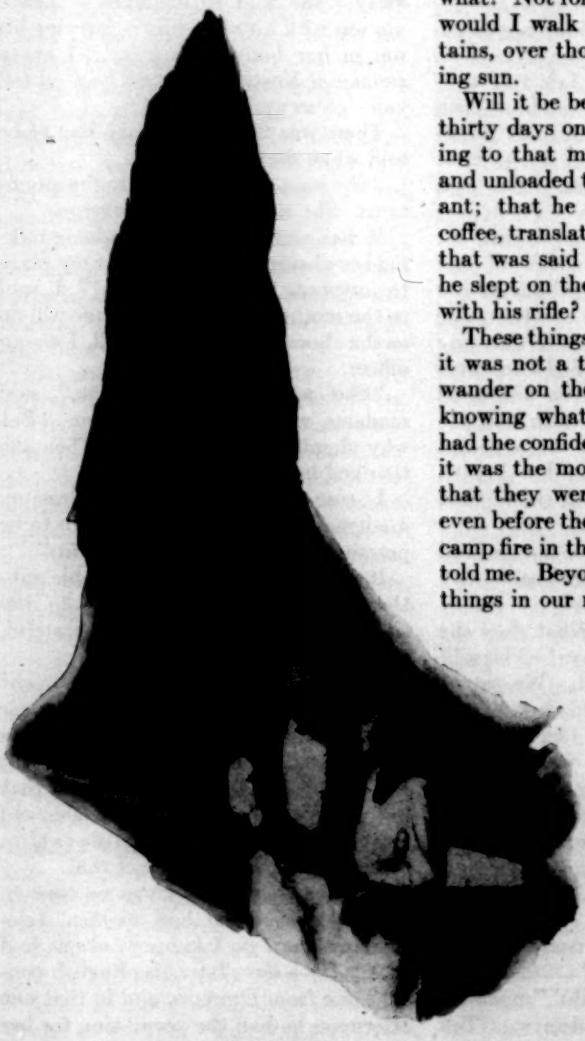
It was part of her unfathomable subtlety always to appear blind to the subtleties of others. "I am grateful, truly," she said.

Per Zoti! there was a situation, eh? It was madame's wisdom to appear stupid—but even the wisest women can be deceived. She did not know that Lek was married. She hoped then that he would marry her? And the old mother— Yes, after consideration something might be made of that.

Imagine that I was given no time to consider! Madame had written, telegraphed—how do I know what she had done? Two days later the English consul came from Durazzo, and in that one afternoon he had the permission for her journey to the mountains. They dined together that night, talking till a late

hour. Was she an English agent? But the English and Americans are enemies because of Albania's oil fields. What double game was she playing? Or was the Englishman a rival of Lek? At the foot of the stairs he shook her hand, as though she were a man. Before dawn she and Lek had gone to the mountains.

By Allah, it is not my idea of pleasure with a woman, those mountain trails.



WE CAME UPON THEM STARING AT THE MINARETS AND CYPRESSES

Lek was undoubtedly mad. One heard that he had defied his family. "I will have one month of happiness in my life," he had said. Lek is Catholic, yet he had refused to listen to the priest. *Enfin*, what is religion? I am civilized, though I wear the fez. We know what all religions are, eh? Fatness for the lazy priests. But Lek was a serious Catholic. He had committed a sin. For what? Not for all the houris of Paradise would I walk one hour in those mountains, over those trails, under the burning sun.

Will it be believed that he walked for thirty days on those trails, merely talking to that madame? That he loaded and unloaded the pack-mule, like a servant; that he set up her tent, made her coffee, translated all that she said and all that was said to her, and that at night he slept on the ground outside her tent, with his rifle?

These things were true. You perceive it was not a time to allow strangers to wander on the Serbian border without knowing what they were doing, and I had the confidence of the Ministers. But it was the mother of Lek who told me that they were going to Bulqis. Yes, even before they had talked of it by their camp fire in the Mati, the mother of Lek told me. Beyond doubt there are strange things in our mountains, strange things in the world. *Per Zoti!* everything is a mystery —even Allah.

You comprehend it was my duty that took me to the house of Lek —a question of seizing still another house for League of Nations' commissions. The house of Lek was too small, but —*enfin*, one had a right to enter it, eh? The wife of Lek covered her face, as even Catholic women do before Moslem eyes, but the old mother met me boldly. We sat on

the rug under the trees by the fountain, in the courtyard where the wife of Lek had been weaving. She said nothing, sitting there, a bundle of silks with strange eyes looking out of it.

"That evil one has bewitched my son," Lek's mother said. "She has a charm from the foreign demons. But she is going to Bulqis—she is going to Bulqis," the old woman said, and laughed.

Per Zoti! it was not a laugh to warm the sunshine. A man hears strange things in this world. One sits in a stupid courtyard, in this dullness of Tirana where nothing happens but the eternal movement of sunlight on white walls and the endless rippling of streams in these barbarous streets; one looks at these old women, listens to them—Come, come, *mon vieux*, we are civilized men, eh? All the same, how did they know that Lek and the little madame were going to Bulqis?

THE MOTHER OF LEK CAME TOWARD US

The old mother told me this, also: that Lek had been bewitched as a boy when he went to school in England. He had thrown away the blue ring she had fixed in his ear when he went, to protect him from evil. He had come back possessed by a madness, saying foolish and wicked things. He said that the life of a man was more important than his honor, or than even the honor of his family; he swore that he would never marry the woman to whom they had betrothed him in his cradle. They had tied him with ropes when the woman was brought as a bride to his house. He had refused to look at his wife; he cursed his father. Only when his father was dying had the evil spell gone from Lek so that he consented to be married by the priest. But he had gone at once to the wars, leaving the women without hope of a son to keep the family alive.

After the wars they had followed him to Tirana, and they and the good priest had brought Lek back to the ways of honor and duty. But now the foreign woman had come and brought the evil again upon him, destroying their peace, breaking his honor. The old mother would have cursed her—but she looked at his wife and was still, and she smiled.

Lek and the little madame were going to Bulqis. It was from that valley that the wife of Lek had come. You imagine to yourself that woman, scorned by her husband— Trust the little ones to find consolation, you will say, eh? But, *per Zoti!* there was the old woman, watching! Yes, you imagine her, eating her heart through all the years, perfuming, painting herself, braiding the gold coins in her hair, feverish, despairing, hoping— What an ending for the expectations of the girl carried as a bride to her husband's home! And now, when at last she is heavy with his child, this foreign madame with the irritating eyes comes and carries him away—that little madame who laughs in the face of an officer and a gentleman!

Enfin, Lek was stupid. A man should manage his little affairs better than that,

eh? *Mais, "toujours malheureux, les amoureux."* As for me, I do not worry about women. There are plenty of them—in any civilized country.

Yes, those two went to Bulqis. I know nothing of the place myself; a valley of rocks, they say, of strange caverns and strange springs. They say there is always a darkness in Bulqis, that the sun is afraid to shine upon the things that are there—things which only the dervishes see. It was in Bulqis, long ago, that the spirits of the trees sang to our king Alexander the Great of the world he was to conquer. It is said that one hears such songs there still. *Per Zoti*, if the little madame heard songs, they are not songs I wish to hear.

She was thin when she went; she returned a veritable bone. She reached the hotel one evening, brown and dirty as a peasant, wearing trousers and opangi that were rags. Yet she was unperturbed, even radiant. One would have said the happiest of—but can one call her a woman? Could any real woman be happy when men were seeing her in such garments?

Enfin, one does not believe these old women's tales of Bulqis.

She came down later, wearing her white costume which now hung upon her as upon a stick, and dined with Lek. *Per Zoti!* after thirty days of talking, still they talked. What has a woman to say that can last thirty days? That little madame who could not even play prettily with a compliment! *Entendu*, we crowded about her, offering them and hearing her babble. She talked of ten thousand nothings. Who cares for the ways of peasants? She showed little books in which she had written them down. She would write a book about Albania, she said. A book about our peasants? Who would believe such absurdity!

For the first time, however, she showed some femininity in her appearance—but what taste! On a silver chain around her neck she wore a blue bead—such a bead as peasant women tie in babies' hair, and mule drivers in the forelocks of their mules, to guard against evil. A bead worth perhaps two piastres. It gave the lie to her pretensions about publishing a book, for no woman with money enough to pay printers would wear such trash as a jewel.

"Charming, madame!" I said, touching it. "The color of your eyes!"

"I like it," she said, drawing away slightly. "It was given to me on the way to Bulqis by a woman to whom we gave some medicine for her baby."

So: she had worn it in Bulqis.

To our conversation Lek added nothing. It was only with madame that one saw him talking. On approaching one heard nothing from his compressed lips. Madame showed toward him a species of affection without warmth. She treated him neither like a lover nor like a servant. Imagine, after thirty days alone with her, to have made no more progress! That night he did not go to his house but had a bed laid down for him in a room behind that in which the servants slept. He went to it as soon as madame had gone upstairs, shutting the door against our laughter. We amused ourselves for a time, singing songs from the French cabarets, but at nine o'clock the café closed. There was nothing to do but go home.

The dullness of Tirana at night is inexpressible. Not a movement anywhere, not one glittering window, not a strain of music. Nothing but moonlight and shadows on the arcades and on the running water that would not be tolerated in a civilized city. Not a sound except the streams or the barbarous quavering of some shepherd's flute. Actually, a man's footsteps make an echo. Without turning my head I can be sure that my orderly is close behind me.

We had not gone far that night when he said in a low voice, "Forgive me, Halil Pasha, may I speak? Someone follows us."

It appeared to be a woman. One cannot be too careful; these shapeless garments may also conceal a man with a

dagger. An officer must take no chances with his life, *entendu*. I commanded my orderly to stand between us while I questioned her. In fact, it was not a woman. But it was no man whom I had seen before, nor have I seen him since, nor any man wearing his strange fashion of garments. The moonlight filled his eye-sockets with darkness. He said:

"Halil Pasha, I bring you a message from Bulqis. This is the message. You hate her, also. There is a blue bead between her and—us."

You may be sure I asked him who he was. He answered, "You understand."

"Nonsense!" I replied. Then I said, "Why should I trouble myself—?"

"A brave officer deserves to be honored by his government. A brave and clever officer," that man said slowly.

"If there were a question of an appointment," I said, "a foreign appointment—?"

"To Cairo," said that man whose eyes I could not see.

"To Paris," I said boldly, "an appointment to Paris, at once."

"At once."

"For a blue bead?"

"For a blue bead."

"Wait!" I exclaimed, instantly seeing my error. "An appointment as ambassador, as ambassador—" But the man was gone.

It was impossible, in the thickness of the shadow under the arcades, to determine in what direction he went. There was not a whisper of opangi on the cobblestones. Nothing but the sound of running water and the call of that cursed owl in the cypress by the minaret.

Per Zoti! We are civilized, eh? We do not believe— Yet this occurred as I have told it. Pht! One would not think —one would not think of it twice.

Still there is always amusement in getting a token from a woman, eh? In this cursed stupidity of Tirana there is amusement even in getting one from a woman in whom, by Allah, one is not interested. Have I mentioned that Captain Koleka had got a handkerchief of hers? He can not make me believe she gave it to him. What was it, after all? A bit of linen—without perfume, without monogram, without even a bit of stain from red lips!

HE SET UP HER TENT AND MADE HER COFFEE

Her lips were not red when I saw her next day. She was nothing but eyes, and thinness—deplorable. But one can always rely upon the vanity of women, especially of the least charming ones. She was sitting in the deserted café, opening letters, scores of letters of every size and shape. She spoke of them happily when I sat down, saying they had been awaiting her return from the mountains. A pitiable attempt, you perceive, to show that men pursued her with *billets doux*.

"Do not speak of them," I said, turning away as though the sight were agony to me.

"Why, what is the matter?" she exclaimed.

"They remind me of those other men," I said. I was obliged to speak quickly: someone might come in at any moment. Therefore I chose the brusque manner of a man overpowered by emotion. "Madame," I said, "your beautiful eyes have broken my heart. I cannot ask you to share my life in this horrible place. But—if I were ambassador to Paris—? Oh, madame, can you give me no hope?"

"But, monsieur—you aren't—it isn't possible you are asking me to marry you?" she said.

I assure you it was a ticklish moment for me. True, the Koran allows us four wives, but it is Albanian custom to have only one, and in any case I have no intention of troubling my household with a second woman. But there was tenderness in the eyes of that little madame. Even in that moment she was able to conceal her eagerness, but her warmer emotions were too strong. I averted my eyes and you may believe that I thought quickly.

"It was—my hope—" I murmured.

"Believe me, monsieur," she said, in the softest of voices, "I did not understand. I'm—"

I interrupted her cleverly. "Madame, you have given me the happiness of seeing you, of speaking to you, a happiness that must suffice for all my life. Madame, I am only a poor soldier. But—would you give me the blue bead? I would treasure it more than my life. It would be a talisman—"

"Oh, monsieur, surely you don't believe that!" she said, almost laughing. Yet she was most amazingly softened. Had I cared to take the trouble, doubtless I could have developed in her a peculiar kind of charm. In another moment I had the blue bead and was concealing it against my heart. They are all alike, the women, eh? She detained me a moment longer, talking of—I know not what: her thanks for my kindness, her interest in my future, her hopes for my country—in another moment she would have been speaking of peasants again! Fortunately I saw the Minister of War going by and pretended that he had signaled to me.

If you doubt that I had the blue bead, you may inquire of any officer who was then in Tirana. I have since lost it somewhere. A blue bead worth a piastre! But, *écoutez*— Is it not curious that next day madame was ill, unable to leave her room? It was malaria, they said; malaria caused by her foolish habit of eating fruit. Perhaps. For ten days she was ill in that room filled with flies and mosquitoes, in the heat of summer. Lek took the Turkish doctor to see her once; she would not have him again. From beneath her windows we could hear her talking, talking, incomprehensibly, though no human being was with her. On the eleventh day she staggered downstairs—you may imagine what a spectacle. Her teeth chattered on the edge of her coffee cup. Lek was like one possessed by the small demons.

Listen again. Madame's money had disappeared. Can you explain how a handful of gold napoleons had disappeared from that room? No one could enter the windows. Every servant in the hotel was honest. Perhaps she had never had the money. Who can say? One never knew what she was, what she wanted here, whether she was rich or poor.

Bien! She had no money. She could

not pay the hotel or the doctor, she could not hire a carriage to take her away. You will say that if they—of Bulqis—wished her to leave Lek's country— But consider. She could neither go nor stay; it was as though the world rejected her. Yet all the while she shook with cold and burned with fever she smiled as always. The only change was in her eyes.

It appeared that she had checks on foreign banks. But what money-changer would give good gold for a piece of paper? This is not a civilized country. It was known that Lek had telephoned to Durazzo, but—mark this!—on the day she rose from her sickness the English consul had gone to Brindisi; he would be gone at least three weeks. If she had asked charity of the government she might have had it. Or some rich Bey might have taken pity upon her in the name of the Compassionate. But she would not ask. As for Lek—evidently when he went to the mountains he had left his money with his mother.

"I BRING YOU A MESSAGE"

In the end she set out to walk to Durazzo, three days of walking. Lek went with her. He was even uglier than before, with a heat of torment in his eyes and the skin drawn tight upon the bones of his face. She left her baggage, saying she would send money later. She took only a small package and those books in which she had written. Imagine, that on the way to Durazzo she was lodged and fed by peasants!

Two weeks later Lek returned. In Durazzo they had got enough money to pay madame's passage on an Italian freighter, the *Belgrano*. You recall its sinking, below Valona? Yes, she was on it when it sank. She was rescued and brought into Tepelini. She had then only the little watch on her wrist, which she gave for a visa to Greece. She went down through the mountains of Janina, walking—a six weeks' journey, to reach a consul of her own country. Conceive that on the day she crossed the Greek frontier an American consul arrived here! But she did not know that.

The refugees from Smyrna were at that time in Athens; she contracted the fever called typhus. I have heard that she lived, that she was recovering in Corfu when the Italians shelled it. Beyond that I know nothing.

This year a letter came from her to Lek; we saw it in the post office. She had not reached her own country yet, for the letter was postmarked Marseilles. The letter did not appear to have money in it, but there is no way of knowing, as Lek had paid her bills before it came. It is impossible to speak to him of her; the little bantam threatened to kill Captain Koleka if he uttered her name again. *Per Zoti*, he would do it, too!

Enfin, only an idle tale. I have nothing to do with the superstitions of ignorant mountaineers; no, by Allah! I believe neither in gods nor devils, neither in Christ nor Mahomet. We who are civilized, we believe only what we see, eh? As for Lek, every Sunday he goes to mass and for the rest he walks alone, leading by the hand his little son, already dressed in the clothes of Europe. What, I ask you, could she have seen in one like that, a nobody, an ugly little silent man?

A COURTESY

ELINOR WYLIE

HAVING conceived that this delight alone
Must be the corner stone
For all my building; having stripped it bare
Of you and found it fair;
Having accepted deprivation;
I have knelt down to bow
My brow upon the brow
Of granite; I have filled my empty hand
With running pulse of sand,
And twined my fingers in a bough of leaves;
I have pushed back my sleeves
To let the water twist
Its coolness round my wrist,
And I have kissed the comfortable moss
For cushioning a cross
Of racking timber sharp as childbirth bed;
I have embraced instead
Of love, a ponderable cloud of rain.

Let us return again
Together; let us kneel upon the grass
In quiet clear as glass,
Bending stiff necks and crooking stubborn knees
In courteous obsequies
For that poor wolf, but late mistitled Pride;

Let us be thankful that this beast has died,
And thankful for the silence of the trees,
As I was thankful for the cheer I had
To hear their chattering when I was sad.

RENO

BY KATHARINE FULLERTON GEROULD

NOTHING is more bitter, we have been told, than a gratified desire. I pondered the saying often during my stay in Nevada. For I had had, for a great many years, a certain curiosity about Reno: a desire to experience it. I had wanted to see Reno, Nevada, as I had wanted to see Butte, Montana, and New Orleans, Louisiana, and San Antonio, Texas. It had struck me that it would be curious and interesting. Here I was, then, with my desire fulfilled, my curiosity free to slake itself; and I very much wished myself elsewhere.

The fact is that Reno, though a neat and pretty town, with one of those Western situations that break the Eastern heart with envy, is a very dull town for the visitor. It is only after the traveler begins to put to himself a few questions, and explore social history for the answers, that it takes on any interest at all. "How Reno got that way"—to use a despicable phrase—*is* interesting. And the answer is compounded of many subtle Americanisms. Reno could not have happened east of the Mississippi, whatever the state divorce laws. In fact, Reno could not have happened—again, whatever the divorce laws—outside the State of Nevada. Nevada is different from all other Western states; and the quality of Nevada is a strong element in the quality of Reno. The dullness is partly the fault of Nevada and partly the fault of Paris.

Let us orient ourselves by stating a few facts. Nevada, which, "set down in the East would fill a space from central Pennsylvania to Georgia, and from Delaware Bay to Ohio" (oh, "goodly is our heritage!"), holds not much more than seventy-five thousand souls. Reno, on the eastern slope of the Sierras close to the California border, is by far the largest town in the state, having about thirteen thousand citizens. The thirteen thousand do not, presumably, include the seventeen or eighteen hundred men and women who are always there for "the necessary six months." Goldfield with an odd four thousand (before the fire), Carson City and Sparks with twenty-five hundred apiece, are Reno's only rivals—and you can see that they are not really rivals at all. Reno is the metropolis and the magnet—even the legislators, when the legislature is in session, are apt to stop in Reno and motor to Carson City for their day's duties. Moreover, it must be stated as sober fact that Reno as a place "gets" people—not only Nevadans but citizens of other states who have business interests in Nevada and therefore have to visit Reno. More than one rolling stone has rolled there to rest, liking it better than a hundred other places.

Why then call it dull? The answer, as has been said, is partly Nevada and partly Paris.

Reno is dull because its roots—socially, humanly speaking—are fastened in decay. If you like to put it in that way, Reno is sinister. This little town with its girdle of enchanting mountains, its wide well-kept streets, its delightful park where the Truckee River flows—irrigation creating for it a dense greenness in the midst of the hopeless desert—has a fairly equivocal future. Its past is the past of the great

mining camps. It was bred in their tradition. The wealth that is in Reno at the present day was made in Goldfield and Tonopah (for there is nothing left in Nevada of what was made longer ago in Virginia City). The Reno magnates are men who knew and took their part in the earlier hectic days—sinking into old age and death now, squandering or saving their "piles," but without any prospect of more "piles" to be made. The gold and silver, you see, have gone. Even the Comstock Lode petered out at last; and though they are mining the cheap ore at Virginia and American Flat, though Goldfield and Tonopah go on somehow with dwindling strength, Nevada is forlorn of mining booms. Yet it must never be forgotten that the tradition, the point of view, the human habit of Reno are the tradition, the point of view, the human habit of the mining camp. A mining camp after the gold is gone is not a cheerful or an exciting place; and dabbling in cheap mining stocks, or playing the races (such races!), is a poor substitute for standing with your foot on the rail of the Crystal Bar and watching a fortune swim towards you. The big men, the great adventurers go, and only the little men and the habit of gambling — for lessening stakes — are left. The precious metals made the state; and unlike California, Nevada has not much to fall back on. Oh, yes, there is truck farming round Fallon: the land that is not good enough for cattle will suffice for sheep; and various Italians are slowly enriching themselves by intensive vegetable gardening. But the American population of Nevada has never been of the farming or the ranching type; the obstacles of the desert are too many to have attracted that type. So much for Nevada's part in Reno's dullness.

Reno has no visible industries. It makes its living, as far as one can tell, off the marital unhappiness that prevails in forty-seven states of the Union. The divorcées (as they are always called) bring a certain amount of money into the place, and banks, shops, and markets are kept going in that way. The churches are inconspicuous; the few doctors have Chinese herbalists for hot rivals; the lawyers, naturally, are many. The Public Library is so tiny that it could not possibly keep anyone in reading matter for six months, and if there were a run on its shelves most of the besiegers would have to stop in the street. I remember that during my stay in Reno it was closed for a day or two "in order that a few shelves might be put up in the basement to accommodate books that might from time to time be added." The Washoe County Court House, however, is a handsome building, and quite large enough to accommodate any number of simultaneous decrees. Divorce being the recognized industry—if not, indeed, a monopoly—the lawyers have pooled their interests to the extent of standardizing the fee for a divorce suit. The mere legal fee is not high—it is, or was, three hundred dollars, I believe—but extra expenses are almost certain to be incurred. You can get almost any ingredient of drama in Reno, naturally—from cocaine to the convolutions of Henry James psychology; yet the fact remains that Reno is less interesting than it must once have been because of the American habit, in later years, of going to Paris rather than to Nevada for easy divorce. Paris has resources of entertainment, distraction, civilization; and Reno has none. There is indeed an almost cynical refusal on the part of the solid citizenry of Reno to offer any attraction to the temporary resident save the attraction of legal escape from a detested spouse. They do not even change the bills often enough at the movie theaters to guarantee you a fresh one every day or two. Reno is dull; and the measure of stoicism with which the dullness is endured depends wholly on the character of the individual. Any American is likely to find a group of acquaintances in Paris; but he—or she

—will find no familiar faces in Reno. It is a lonely adventure, this six months' sojourn in little-populated Nevada. Nor can you mitigate it by running away for a week, now and then, to Salt Lake or San Francisco. They keep tabs on you better than they used. (Reno *has*, in its time, been criticized.) Your six months cannot be docked by so much as a day. If you leave the state, the time of your absence is charged against you and you have to work it out—"make it up" by prolonging your stay at the other end. You can divorce with ease in the sovereign state of Nevada; but in order to do it you have to stop there. Six months' residence is not much, but it has to be *bona fide*. No—not even the California shores of Lake Tahoe: you must remain on the Nevada side. Reno, then, really means Reno; and what comes of it?

Everyone who has lived in a college town knows the way in which "the students" are regarded as a class by themselves. "The students do this"; "the students never go there"; "the students like—or do not like—this or that." Precisely thus in Reno are "the divorcées" referred to. "The divorcées do thus and so"; "that is for the divorcées." What, then, is their manner of life? What are the occupations of their exile and the technic of their days? They come, a little shy and strange, and make their arrangements; they are not herded together by any social agent; there is no Beau Nash to control the society of Reno and introduce them to one another. There are no natural meeting places for lonely ladies and gentlemen: their amusements depend on their wits and their tastes.

If you are a woman desiring a divorce and resolved to obtain it in Nevada, you arrive in Reno and go to the hotel. There is more than one hotel, but one is pre-eminent. You choose your lawyer; you make your legal arrangements for freedom. If you have not decided on your "grounds" before you came, you must do it at once. Even in Nevada you have to have "grounds"; though almost anything will go, especially as cases are not so likely to be contested here as at home. A dissatisfied spouse, that is, does not usually absent herself from home for six months until the situation has been, at least, stated. In a large number of cases the husband must, indeed, be paying the bills. All the ladies seem to cling to their engagement rings. Some of them have plenty of money, naturally—and there are ways to spend it in Reno, even if those ways are not very inviting. But there is not much "splurge" here. Remember, as we have said, that Reno is not fashionable, and that the people with money and imagination go to Paris. Truth compels one to admit that the divorcées are on the whole a cheap-looking lot; and that the few who look expensive look peculiarly uncivilized—are apt, in fact, not even to look respectable. Some are mouselike, and some look really miserable. But generally speaking they are poor figures for drama.

The divorcée, having secured her lawyer, sits down and prepares to wear out her necessary six months. She seldom stops more than a week or a fortnight at the hotel: she immediately takes a little apartment—whether it is a flat in one of the many apartment buildings or a mere room or two in a private house. There she busies herself as best she can, in ironically domestic ways. No acquaintances are made in the hotel itself which, in spite of hanging out a sign in its little lobby, "Breakfast being served" (or "lunch" or "dinner"), affects a truly metropolitan impersonality. Acquaintance, contacts come after the withdrawal to one's own lair. There are—as you would expect—both a furtive distrust and a secret freemasonry operative in the hearts of the divorcées. You are playing a lone hand in Reno; but so are the others. Gradually acquaintance forms, in apartment-house manner. You are very lonely; and in spite of your domestic duties (there are no servants to be had in Reno)

you hardly know what to do with yourself, unless you have brought a companion of your own sex, or your children. There is, you see, except in the racing season, nothing whatever to do in Reno; and the Silver State Jockey Club has only two meetings a year—early summer and early autumn. Those who can afford it usually buy motor cars. But who wants to drive through the desert alone? You enter into talk with the woman in the apartment beside or below you. She too is idle and lonely. You inspect each other; you make other similar contacts; and eventually there are bridge parties and movie parties. If you dine outside your flat—and many women seem to feel that breakfast and lunch are all they care to get for themselves—you find a friend to go with.

Sometimes of course, as anywhere else, a man or a woman has introductions to Reno residents and may work into the settled life of the place. But for the most part acquaintance has to be made in that casual and hesitating way; and I did not discover that it is any part of a lawyer's necessary business to find friends for his clients. The social life of the residents goes on apart from the divorcées. They must get a good deal of free drama from the situations that now and then arise publicly in this town; but the divorcées are their living, not their diversion. There is no prejudice against them as a type—Reno is not so cynical as all that—but natural social law operates. You cannot fill up your personal life with birds of passage; and unless a real sympathy springs up, you let them go their own way. "Do you play bridge?" the attractive young wife of a Reno lawyer whom I happened to "meet" asked me. When I admitted a faint addiction to the game she said, "Oh, you ought to get plenty of bridge, then. I believe the divorcées play a lot." I was not a divorcée, so far as she knew; but in spite of mild disclaimers I could never convince a Renoite that I was anything but a divorcée, actual or prospective. What else, indeed, could I be? There is only one reason for any Eastern woman to be in Reno.

"How do they bear six months of it? What do they *do*?" I asked myself, over and over. Reno is four thousand feet high, set in the last tumble of the Sierras. Even if you have a car, the season for driving it is not so very long. No matter how you choose your season, there must be weeks, if not months, when you cannot sit in the park, meditating above the Truckee River, or play tennis on the park courts, or drive over one pass to Virginia City or over another range to Lake Tahoe. Even if you go to the races every day while they are on—and most people do—the two meetings together do not fill up many weeks. The racing is not first-class, you understand: most of the horses are bound for no more distinguished bournes than Vancouver or Tiajuana; they will never be entered at Saratoga or Belmont Park or for the Kentucky Derby. I sampled, as in duty bound, the most exciting feature of Reno social life; went to the races, bet according to the best advice and lost my money (but who would expect a horse named "Fireplace" to win a race?), discussed the ethics of the turf with my escort, and watched the curious limited throng. You look across the race track to a lonely beautiful range of the Sierras—never had race track a lovelier setting. There in front of you are the boxes of the magnates; all round you are collarless farmers and their tight-lipped wives, divorcées painted and unpainted, children in arms, drifting males of every type, a few squaws with papooses on their backs, spectacled Chinamen. Everyone, male and female—except the squaws and the infants in arms—is betting. The *pari mutuel* machines during the summer meeting of the Silver State Jockey Club last year took in over two million dollars. This is Nevada, where betting is in the blood; and the divorcées bet too, up to the limits of their purses. Sometimes, alas!

beyond. One woman in my hotel corridor bet all she had, lost it, and came back to face the collapse of her budget and the complete frustration of her plans. Her despair terrified the chambermaid, who came in and told me about it. But the Reno hotel is not a boarding house, and the surface of life showed no ripple.

Twenty-one days of horse racing, however, do not fill six months; and my question persisted. What do they *do*? I should never find out without being told, so I asked respectively, a man and a woman who did not know each other. The man—a resident of Reno for years—said, "Well, to be perfectly frank, most of them take lovers." The woman—herself a divorcée—said precisely the same thing. The longer I stayed in Reno, the more clearly I saw that that was the answer. As there are no legitimate social distractions for the stranger in Reno—by which I mean no plays, no music, no galleries, hardly a library, and churches very down at heel—the idle, discontented human being on the verge of a complete freedom takes to pleasures that even in Reno are not considered legitimate, though they are deemed, apparently, inevitable. These women are thrown absolutely on their own resources for six months in a strange land. Many, if not most of them, lack resources within themselves. The habitual duties and relations are violently excised from their lives. In many cases they have not yet planned their futures; and in any case their futures will not lie here. They feel the freedom of the castaway, or the men and women having their last fling at a spa which they know will not cure. It is a curious, temporary, exotic interlude in life—and they are excruciatingly bored. The moral paste of which many of them are made is an inferior composition . . . and there are the same old easy and obvious temptations.

Some of them—let me say in parenthesis—have their future lives planned already. Not long before I arrived in Reno a woman had lost her head, Reno-fashion; had taken an unscrupulous lover, a doctor, who permitted her to acquire the drug habit. When she was down and out, he chucked her—refused even to visit her in the hospital, where she was lying clad literally in the rags of charity. Public opinion was roused against the man, and in camp-and-frontier fashion they ran him out of town. But the woman? Out of her own resources she had not so much as a toothbrush left. The man she expected to marry after her decree was granted had been supporting her; and he withdrew all funds after he learned of her behavior. Someone helped her to get out of Reno—whither she went no one knew. Oh, yes, that kind of thing happens, and real Renoites do not approve any more than you or I; but they are less censorious, perhaps, and—since surprise is a necessary element in shock—they are not so shocked, being unsurprised. Luckier divorcées than such a one as this buy her jewels out of the pawnshop, and life goes on.

There are exceptions, male and female: in many the moral paste is finer and the Reno interlude is a tragically necessary one. These men and women set their teeth and bear the burden of empty, small-town days—living quietly, seeing very few people, wringing such inspirations and suggestions as they can from mere patience. But, as we were saying, of latter years Paris has welcomed the best and most fortunate of these.

A scandal can be a scandal even in Reno, as I have intimated. You cannot run a successful industry in these days without a semblance of virtuous management. And the management is virtuous—granted its principles. That is why Reno looks like a paradox until one has looked hard and long. There is cynicism in the Reno point of view: there is also the blessed, honest, liberty-loving West. When a certain bishop started to make trouble about easy Nevada divorces, the Reno Chamber of Commerce met for a serious session and devised ways and means to "put a stop to

the bishop's foolishness." The home market must be protected. If Nevada adopted the New York divorce laws overnight, in six months—I should not give it more—Reno would be about as alive and prosperous, probably, as Tonopah. The University of Nevada would still sit on its hill at the far end of the town; the races might last out a year or two. But there would be very few shops and garages left, and I fancy more than one bank would fail. Reno does live on divorce: there is no use blinking the fact. Your six months' residence must be *bona fide*—they are very stern about that. Though your grounds may be fantastic—one man accused his wife of keeping too many Persian cats and got his decree with no difficulty—grounds of a sort you must have. It is possible to eschew publicity entirely: to have your hearing and get your decree after hours, with none but the absolutely necessary witnesses. I know of cases where it has been done—though discreetly—and the opportunity of like privacy was definitely offered to me. But on the whole the requirements are so easy that it is not hard to keep them honestly. The divorces that are fought are the divorces one gets at home. If a woman can arrange to live in Nevada for six months, it means either that her husband is willing for her to divorce him or that he is, financially and practically, powerless to prevent her. Divorcées arrive in Reno with a lot of spade-work already done.

Those are some of the cynical aspects of the Nevada attitude. To people who take the Catholic point of view concerning marriage and divorce, all aspects of that attitude are cynical. But being, historically and prevailingly, a Protestant country, America at large accepts the fact of divorce and differs only on the procedure. You must, I think, grant that every sovereign state has a right to make its own divorce laws. There is a certain amount of agitation at present for a uniform divorce law; but it is to be hoped that American common sense will prevent such a calamity. There is no perfect divorce law, since divorces differ from one another as much as marriages do: no code can cover all cases. In Nevada they believe that they are acting morally in making divorce easy. They do not make it any easier, really, than some other Western states—Washington, I believe, grants divorces on as "slight" grounds as does Nevada, the difference being that it demands a longer residence in the state. Nor when I say that they believe they are acting morally do I mean to imply the least admixture of hypocrisy. This is the Far West: strongly individualistic, unable to live in bonds, distrustful of community tyrannies, able to do without luxuries so long as it has elbow-room. These are the people who must have wide views from their windows, who cannot be choked or herded or coerced—heirs of frontier codes and adventurous attitudes.

"Why should any woman live with a man who makes her wretched?" one Reno woman asked me. She was not arguing about divorce in general: she was merely indicating, while telling me about the unhappy position of a friend of hers, that she could see no sanction in heaven or earth for undesired bondage. Oh, yes, these Reno citizens believe in easy divorce; they are subtly horrified at the notion of anyone, save a criminal, being kept in any way captive against his will. Like you or me they can censure a particular bit of human behavior; but on the principle of the thing they are absolutely fixed. The laws must be thus to protect people's freedom: if some people misuse the laws—well, isn't that true of all laws? "It's very decent," I mused ironically one day, concerning some quiet breaking of bonds. My companion—a very hard-boiled Nevadan—brought his fist down on the table. "Exactly!" he said. "Nevada is practically the only state in the Union where divorce *is* decent. In most states they make it so disgusting that decent people can hardly go through with it."

Even the convinced and honest Nevadan must admit that a good many of the divorces are not morally pretty, and are acquired without due regard to personal responsibilities and other people's rights. But I think he would always cling to his conviction that it was better to have the laws abused than to abolish them. Nor does he worry over abuses so much as an Easterner, simply because, being a Far Westerner, he is used to minding his own business. East of the Missouri no one minds his own business; but west of the Missouri people really do mind it. I do not mean to hold up the sovereign State of Nevada as an example of legal purism. Nor is it an especially law-abiding state. It is wild country, most of it, pretty well unredeemed to civilization. Perhaps the only laws they respect are the laws that give, not curtail freedom. They more or less ride steeplechases through the rest, I fear.

My own position in Reno was of course anomalous. Within twenty-four hours I had to take an attitude; and it was not easy. I know of nothing more difficult than to discuss, in any detail, a divorce that you have no intention of getting. My first caller—to whom I had, indirectly, an introduction—opened conversation by saying sympathetically, "You are here for the usual reason, I suppose"—and proceeded to tell me of an apartment, providentially vacated, into which I could move within the week. Of course I did not want an apartment: I replied vaguely that I was there to look about me, to see what the place was like. "You don't mean to say, I suppose, that your getting your divorce depends on the beauties of Reno?" was his perfectly reasonable query. I could not truthfully say that it did. He was baffled, I suppose; thought me squeamish, or inferred that I was not yet sure of my intentions—perhaps, of my "grounds." Even my confession that I sometimes "wrote" started no suspicion. When I declared that I was not getting a divorce at present, I was merely urged to get it at the right season of the year, since the six months of winter are the depressing period for "residence."

I think the impression I left with a few kind residents of Reno was that of an erratic woman who did not know her own mind; who was uncertain, not so much about Reno as about divorcing at all: a woman with strange irrelevant curiosities—about old mining camps, prize fights, Nevada thoroughbreds, mountain scenery, dead magnates, and State universities—who thus sought surcease from perplexity and indecision. No disclaimer—not my middle-age itself—could save me from the assumption that in my own good time I should bring suit for divorce; for there were plenty of other middle-aged women in Reno. I am told that the lone female, arriving in the town, is apt to be besieged by touts for lawyers. I was not—doubtless because I was immediately provided with acquaintance, as the hotel lobby could witness. I was, I suppose, an enigma; especially after I refused the suggestion of a party at a roadhouse (I do not dance and was frankly determined not to experiment with Nevadan violations of the Volstead Act) and confessed that I had been, more than once, to visit the University of Nevada campus. Even on my last evening in Reno, when I was known to be taking the train presently for Salt Lake City, a judge was dragged into the hotel to make my acquaintance on the score that sometime I should be coming back to encounter him professionally. The implication was that social relations with the bench could do no harm. Again I disclaimed intentions of divorce; but so does Reno work upon one that even as I said my farewells, with the Overland Limited drawing into the station, I failed to disclose that chief among the "friends" I expected to see in Salt Lake was my husband. It would not have done: it would have been out of keeping. A woman may, I suppose, tarry in Reno without divorcing, but

no woman leaves Reno to keep an appointment with her own husband. Moreover, there was my underlying sense of guilt: a few people had been polite to me, considerate, hospitable, and I was bringing no return—no lawyer's fees, no house rent, no grocer's bills, no bank account even. I had done nothing for the Chamber of Commerce. I had never lied to them; but I had wronged their natural expectations. . . .

I said earlier that Reno was not only dull but sinister; and I have not yet defended the latter adjective. I have tried indeed to explain that Renoites themselves are as nice as anyone else; and that though divorce, in the last analysis, gives them their livelihood, they are convinced that they are doing a moral service to the community. They are giving people their freedom—and freedom is a good thing—very cheap. The publicity, the indecency, the cruelty of divorce proceedings in most of our states really inspire in the Nevadan soul a moral horror. You may not agree with them, but it is not their bland good conscience that makes the atmosphere sinister. Nor is it the divorcées, poor things! They are depressing, as cheap folk making of life a cheap adventure are always depressing, but they would not suffice of themselves to make the air of this pretty town miasmic to the spirit. I knew within a few days that my acute discomfort, my sense of being cut off from all normality, sprang from deeper sources than the divorcées. "It's the races," I said to myself at first; "when the racing crowd has gone, the town will be itself." But eventually the races were over; the horses and their human satellites departed for other meetings; and the town remained the same. Give me any hotel lobby in the world rather than a hotel lobby in Reno; give me any Main Street rather than those trim and shaded avenues, any slum rather than Commercial Row. It is the male population of Reno—not the female—that makes one hire a motor car in desperation and cross the ranges to other Nevadan desolations.

Men of Reno . . . I came very soon to capitalize them in my mind. "Men of Reno" . . . like the title of a tale—something, for quality, between Jack London and John Russell. They were the haunting horror, the poison in the town's blood. I am not speaking of the solid citizens: bankers, lawyers, merchants, and real-estate men. I speak of the drifting males who pace the sidewalks (you meet ten men to one woman, I think, on Reno thoroughfares), who clog the hotel lobbies, who pack aimlessly on street corners, who sit on the park benches above the Truckee River, regarding life with wandering, hostile eyes. I was in full tide of this disaffection when a divorcée told me that in four months she had never once, in daylight or after dark, had a discourteous word spoken to her by a man. That of course is the simon-pure West; and it was good hearing. I cocked my eye (we were dining together) at the other tables and the lobby just outside. I recalled a few news items in the *Reno Evening Gazette*. Aloud, I praised the West and the men of the West, harking back to old knowledge and old experience. There was no point in going into the subject with this simple soul. But I could not get rid, in my own mind, of "Gentle Alice Brown." You remember that her conscience was very tender in some matters but that she confessed with no qualms to having

> . . . planned a little burglary and forged a little cheque
> And slain a little baby for the coral on its neck.

The men of Nevada seemed to me, conceivably, Alice Browns. They would not be discourteous to a woman (in the streets of Reno: I fear the unpoliced desert tells another tale); but they might, just possibly, kill her for the cash she carried.

Let me bring other witnesses. "I don't know what these men do," said

one divorcée. "They never seem to do anything. They just hang about. Of course the place is wide open, and the men gamble all the time or play the races or dabble in mining stocks. I suppose they pick up enough money to live on, somehow, but they don't seem to have any business or any work to do." Indeed, eleven o'clock in the morning or three o'clock in the afternoon seem alike to the men of Reno. There are many Italians (greatly prosperous), there are Mexican laborers, there are casual Indians, there are broken men who look as if they had once carried a solitary pick into desolate and delusive regions; but the mass of men that throng the streets of Reno are unplaceable to the normal imagination. They have not the sharpness we associate with men who live by their wits; they cannot all be hangers-on of the Silver State Jockey Club; they look as unprofessional as they do unbusinesslike; and they have no physical "points" to recommend them. They look crude without strength and shifty without sophistication. I have never, anywhere, seen so many human beings whose heads and faces seemed to have gone wrong in the modeling—all very well until suddenly a nose, a chin, a mouth, or some part of the skull's surface met with quick disaster. The exceptions did nothing but point the moral. Your eyes do not leap to the sight of an average human being unless they have been full-fed with the sub-average. It was absurd, the inveteracy with which one jumped to the conclusion that any average-looking male was merely waiting about for his divorce.

Lest it should seem that the divorcée and I were experiencing an essentially feminine shiver over the Men of Reno, let me quote, practically verbatim (I jotted his words down while they were fresh), a clean upstanding young son of the West, himself a ranch-bred lad, now living (and working) in Reno—a quoter of Mark Twain and a devoted admirer of the manifold colors and shapes of the high Sierras. We held much conversation while our business lasted, and to him I put the question:

"What do these men do?" I asked. "They don't look as if they did anything."

"No, ma'am, they don't. Except gamble. There's not more than a quarter of the men in Reno that work for a living."

"Well, but they have to live. And sometimes the luck must go against them."

"Yes, ma'am, sometimes it does, of course. Why, you can't walk along Commercial Row without getting held up half a dozen times, for a meal. But I'll tell you—luck may go against them, but they've always got an ace in the hole. Money's easy in Reno, and they can get away with things here they couldn't anywhere else. Why, while the races were on, you could—anybody could—walk into any place in town and get a drink right over the bar. There were two roulette wheels going and two faro banks, and craps everywhere—just as long as the races lasted. Of course after the races they shut them up."

"But if everybody knew it was going on, the officials must have known."

"Sure, they knew. But you understand—they wanted to keep all that money in town. They didn't want people to clear out. And the officials get something on the side. Law's easy, you know, in this state."

"Do these men live in Reno all the time or come in from everywhere else?"

"Well, they maybe have to light out for a month now and then, but they come back in as soon as they can—ride in on a freight car or something."

"And they never do anything?"

"I've seen fellows round here for years that never did a stroke of work. You understand they may get cleaned out, but they've always got an ace in the hole. Yes, ma'am, always got an ace in the hole."

"Well, but how . . ."

"Oh, they've always got *something*—

maybe an automobile, maybe a woman. . . . Yes, ma'am, they've always got an ace in the hole. They do lose an awful lot, but they seem to go right on. They spend an awful lot and lose an awful lot."

This conversation came at the very end of my stay; but I took it for reminiscent corroboration of all that I had been feeling for a fortnight about the Men of Reno. The same lad told me—his face had lighted up enthusiastically when I spoke of the beauty of the town's situation—that he loved the place so much he could not be happy away from it for three weeks. There was nothing sinister about *him*, and he obviously disapproved of what he called "wildcat laws." He thought it, for example, distinctly wrong that a man he knew should have been allowed, only ten years ago, to put five bullets into another man on the street (causing him to lose both legs) and get off with a mere fifty-dollar fine for disturbing the peace. Yet I do not think he would be censorious like his young counterpart east of the Great Divide.

I have always regretted that my courage failed me for Goldfield, my only consolation being that I should have had to make the decision to go, almost immediately, since Goldfield burned to ashes during my stay in Reno. I hesitated because I was very much alone. If I went to Goldfield (nearly three hundred miles away in the desert) I should have to spend a day and a night there, whether I liked it or not; and though I should never hesitate, however solitary, to visit a mining camp during the boom period, a mining camp after the boom is over is another matter. The real people have gone, and only the desperate, the weak, and the shifty remain. No, I did not venture the long lonely trip to Goldfield. I think I probably made a great mistake. Virginia City's past is so far away now that there is nothing left by which you can recapture it. Architecture in a mining camp is a matter of board shacks without cellars—sometimes the house walls are made of old barrels ranged side by side—and the earth literally resumes it. Between Reno and Carson lies the site of a town that once held twenty thousand souls; and of the twenty thousand residents, the twelve grocery stores, and the thirty saloons, all that the eye can now detect is a dilapidated stone wall that once enclosed the cemetery. No Old Testament city detested of Jehovah ever disappeared more quickly and completely. These things have happened in other Western states—even in California. But most Western states have a present that overshadows, displaces even the recent past: they are going strong on lumber, crops, mines, or cattle. In Nevada there is very little natural wealth of another kind to make one forget, to re-channel the imagination for one. They had Virginia City; they had Goldfield and Tonopah; and even to-day, in the windows of Second Street in Reno, you can see the printed record of the output—staggering even to minds which the Great War has accustomed to vast arithmetic—of the Comstock Lode.

Over in Virginia City itself, when you buy soft drinks in the old Crystal Bar, you see pathetic and absurd mementos on the walls beyond the shadow of the famous and incredible chandelier: General Grant and his lady dressed to go down into the mines, chaperoned by John Mackay and Colonel Fair; James J. Corbett with a pompadour, looking (in spite of being stripped to the waist) like a Sunday School teacher—witnesses of the great days long past. In Virginia City you expect it: it is natural piety if nothing else. But that Reno should still offer you those figures as a matter of contemporary significance seems strange—until you realize that Reno has nothing to remember and nothing to hope for save another "boom"; and that Reno fortunes, as we said, came out of Goldfield—and came rather by gambling in mines, I gather, than by digging in them.

The prominent residents of Nevada have not prevailingly been of a particularly civilized type. On the other hand, Nevada has welcomed, as temporary sojourners, all sorts and kinds. Therefore something cosmopolitan has washed off on the Nevadan metropolis; which is, I suppose, why Reno differs so subtly from other Western small towns. Its equipment for life is no better than theirs; but it has seen all sorts of people and events and is surprised at nothing. The seekers for freedom are less vital, less impressive, less interesting than the seekers for gold; yet no doubt they help to save Reno from being Gopher Prairie. But its fate is the general Nevadan fate: no one stays. The visitors vanish with their freedom as of old they vanished with their gold—both the freedom and the gold are more pleasantly squandered elsewhere. Nevada has always been, for most people, a purely temporary habitation. Therefore it is different from every other sovereign state. Reno is rather a curious isolated phenomenon than a portent or a menace.

"Say," said the elevator girl to me one day (if I ever go back to Reno, it will be for the sake of conversing with the elevator girls), "did you see the Bowers Mansion? Gosh, I wisht I had the time to tell you about Old Man Bowers. Our family was awful intimate with the Bowers family." And she shot upwards, chewing gum violently and adjusting her pink-chiffon dress with one hand while she operated the car skilfully with the other. She never did have time, friendly soul! for the whole story. But I saw the Bowers Mansion; and between manicuring and gum-chewing and the consumption of sundaes in lieu of lunch, and the eternal operating of the car, I learned that "Old Man Bowers, he made his pile off the Comstock. Back in Virginia City his wife used to take in washing and tell fortunes. Then he died; and after he died his wife she lost her money, taking advice from the other world about investments. And gosh! the place was sold for taxes, and look at it now."

The Bowers Mansion lies between Reno and Carson City and is run as a roadhouse—so far as I know, a respectable one. It accommodates Sunday-school picnics occasionally, and divorcées make up parties to lunch there. The fountain that used to run wine when Old Man Bowers entertained his friends does not even run water now; and the solid-gold doorknobs and window-fastenings have been, I believe, frugally removed. The swimming pools (hot and cold, for this is Nevada, where boiling water issues from every mountain-side) are less decorative than swimming pools would be if built by such a magnate now. But at least Old Man Bowers stuck by the source of his wealth; built his Folly where he could look at the single range that separated him from the Comstock Lode. The clairvoyant power that had been a financial help in Virginia City lost his widow her fortune later in the Mansion. But, luckily, Old Man Bowers had died.

At one end of Reno the University sits on a hill of its own, and you look out between buildings across perfect turf to desert foreground and the beautiful Sierras beyond. Anyone in Reno will tell you that the only money made in Nevada mines that has ever done any good to Nevada is Mackay money. All the others lost their fortunes or took them out of the state forever. On the campus, at the end of a vast greensward as exquisite as a bowling green, flanked on either side by birch-shaded brick walks, stands the Mackay School of Mines, and in front of it the Gutzon Borglum statue of John W. Mackay—open shirt, high boots, the left hand resting on his miner's pick, the right hand full of nuggets. The sculptor has not tried to give John Mackay any beauty or comeliness; but he has given him something that the men of Reno have not—a look, shall we say, of reality; of a preoccupation (however crude) with vital things. The big

bonanza kings came and went, much as Mackay came and went; the ore of the Comstock Lode has been sifted over the whole planet; but some of the Mackay gold has returned to Nevada—and Nevada does not forget.

No, to understand Reno you must plumb the heart of the sovereign State of Nevada. You must understand that Nevada is no more fertile or settled for the crowds that have come to scar her soil. They have filched her mineral wealth and died or departed. Neither crops nor commerce have resulted. Yet these are the people and the frenzies that have built the tradition of the state. A mining civilization is not a civilization at all: it is temporary, feverish, uncreative. The divorcées of Reno are no more impermanent than the men who "made" and left Virginia City and later Goldfield. Yet these men have built a legend not like other legends, and Nevada's lonely and forsaken eyes still glow with romance. You might irrigate every inch of Nevada soil and turn in thousands of homesteaders; but Nevada, I fancy, would still remember, and would infallibly despise them. It is certainly not a state that is going to put barriers in the path of the adventurer: it is not going to make divorce difficult.

Reno, you may be sure, would like to be another Goldfield if it could. It never will be, since the gold is not there. But if you care to know the municipal ideals of Reno, let me record for you a paragraph from an editorial published in the *Reno Evening Gazette* after the Goldfield fire:

> It was the last of the great mining booms, and, as the Associated Press story says to-day, Goldfield was the last of the mining boom towns. There will be others perhaps in the years to come, but there will never be another Goldfield. There was a Virginia City, and there was an Alaskan rush, with their histories and memories. Tonopah is still flourishing, with its traditions still alive. Goldfield, with its wonderful history, was a kind of combination of Virginia City, Tonopah, and Alaska all in one, and the men who lined its busy streets in the great boom from 1904 until 1909 and 1910 had come from all the world. It was a wonderful cosmopolitan gathering. There were men from Dawson and from Nome, standing talking to men from the tin mines of Malaysia and the gold depths of the Rand, or from the mines of China and the distant Ural. Bankers and financiers from every country in the world were there, too, looking for investment. Men whose names stood high in London registered at the Casey and later at the Goldfield hotel and beneath their names would be seen those of bankers who ranked high up on the bourse of Paris or that of Berlin. It was a great gathering.

That is the happy city Reno would, in her heart of hearts, like to be—not a Port Sunlight or a Spotless Town or a Brookline, Massachusetts, or a Los Angeles, California. It is reduced instead to being a divorce mart and to finding its romance in its scenery—as the divorcées apparently are reduced to being "aces in the hole" for the males so vividly characterized by my young friend. Being Western—though Nevadan—it does its civic duty in the matter of planting trees, making wide streets, erecting beautiful school buildings. Its provision for public entertainment is small—smaller than that made by most isolated American towns. I never quite got over wondering why. Probably, however, you must go into the recesses of the Nevadan heart to find any answer. You do not take trouble to provide yourself (or the stranger within your gates) with amusement that does not amuse you. Horse racing amuses them—and they have the meetings of the Silver State Jockey Club. Prize fights amuse them; and in their day they have had famous ones. Gambling amuses them, and good liquor—but the laws are inconvenient, evade them as you will. Religion and chautauquas do not amuse them. Books and music and pictures and plays do not amuse them—and there are none. Because the eyes of the world are upon them they must be discreet—and Reno

is, as we have said, a dull town for the law-abiding visitor. Even divorce does not amuse them much: it has merely come to be the most valuable local commodity. The civilized people make their own life after the fashion of their Western kind—with much dependence on the scenery and motor cars, and on simple outdoor pleasures. But the excitement they crave is not the excitement that women's clubs or church sociables or a municipal entertainment committee can give them. They do not put out their hands for such pleasures.

Far out Virginia Avenue, or within the purlieus of the University, or on the lovely parked heights where a few citizens can greet both sunrise and sunset, "homes"—and, no doubt, quiet—prevail. But down in the town people talk all night in the streets. I never woke, at any hour, without hearing conversation under my windows. Probably there are always some of the men of Reno who have not, at the moment, a place to lay their heads. And of course night is the best time for shooting craps in dark alleys. Curious little Reno! So pretty, so uneventful, so isolated—so very "small-town"—yet so manifestly linked to a brilliant and lawless past; and bearing for all eyes in the broad light of day the light flotsam of divorcées, the heavy jetsam of shifty, broken men.

IN A POWDER CLOSET

(Early Eighteenth Century)

AMY LOWELL

MY very excellent young person,
Since Fate has destined you to play the role of coiffeur,
You will permit that I admire your quite unsurpassed skill,
Together with your polished, if a trifle over-pronounced, manners,
Without by an inch lessening the distance
Which the hazard of birth and the artifice of custom
Have placed between us.
My mirror tells me that you are a personable man;
But, indeed, it is my own image in this same mirror
Which most occupies my attention.
That such a subject as I offer
Engages you to put forth your best efforts
Is only natural;
That I should remain indifferent is equally so.
Be satisfied that the exigencies of your profession
Admit you to privileges from which a more exalted station would exclude you.
My maid will, I am sure, be most happy to accommodate herself to your wishes,
She is a worthy girl and entertains a not unjustifiable belief in my continued recognition of her services.
The spray of heliotrope is well placed.
Do you think a patch just here—at the corner of the eye?
Ah, yes. It adds perceptibly.
You are, Sir, a consummate artist.
To-morrow at four I shall expect you.

DYING FOR "DEAR OLD—"

A Study in Sportsmanship

BY HEYWOOD BROUN

A YOUNG man is being supported by two comrades as he limps across a field. It would not be stretching a point to call him a boy, as he is just past nineteen. His face is grimed and bloody and one foot drags behind him. He is crying. Not because of his injury, mind you, for this is a deeper hurt. A cause for which he has fought is going down to defeat. After the grave disaster of this afternoon his team has lost all claim to the football championship of Cambridge, New Haven, and Princeton, N. J.

He is young, you say, and will soon get over the tragedy which has come upon him. I am not so sure of that. I remember the man who dropped the punt during my Freshman year at Harvard. Everybody thought Yale would win easily, but the crimson line was holding beyond all expectations. The score was 0 to 0 and then this man came into the game. The first play to follow was a punt by the Yale fullback. This man had the ball squarely in his arms. He dropped it. Down flashed a Yale end and in six rushes the ball was carried over the line. There was no further scoring. Yale won.

All this happened in November, and in June there wandered about the yard an unhappy soul who was known to all his fellows as "the man who dropped the punt." He was a senior and it may be that graduation brought some release, although it must have been hard for him to find a spot in the United States to which the news of his mishap had never carried. Fate had been harsh to him but not unscrupulous, exactly. He did drop the punt. The true protagonist of the tragedy was another. He might have been spared, for at the time his brother dropped the punt this one had not yet matriculated at Harvard. That made no difference. The tradition endured. During his four years of college life he was known universally as "the brother of the man who dropped the punt."

And in all seriousness I advance the surmise that there are middle-aged men in this country who have been a little embittered and shaken for thirty years because of the fact that in some critical football game they acquitted themselves badly. The team on which they played was beaten.

I don't think this is a fantastic assumption. Unless he grows up to be President, or defendant in an important murder trial, the college football player is likely to receive far more extensive and searching newspaper publicity during his undergraduate days than at any other period of his life. He is called upon to face an emotional crisis in his life and to be watched by seventy thousand as he faces it. On the following day several million people will read of what he did. The quarterback who calls for a plunge through center will be publicly denounced as dull-witted if the play is piled up just short of the goal line. To stumble in the spotlight never did anybody any good, and if the man who fails happens to be nineteen years old he may get an ego bruise which will leave him permanently tender. And if he

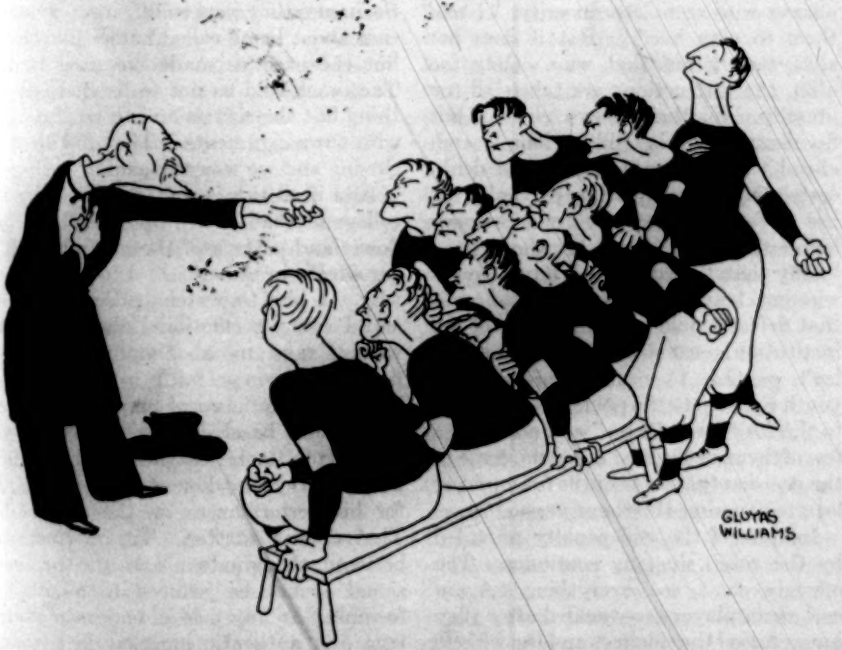
succeeds brilliantly he may be no better off. The American community is cluttered with ineffective young men who gave their souls to learn drop-kicking and then found that there was no future in it.

The football player is not permitted to take any big game casually. Emotionalizing his men is accepted by the coach as a necessary part of his functions. "I was assigned to work on a big halfback," a former football star at Harvard told me. "He was a good defensive player but in the early games he didn't seem to show much fire. He was a lonely sort of a fellow and it took me some time to find a line to get going on. We talked awhile and he told me that he came from Weston, Massachusetts. I said to him, 'My brother lives in Weston, and when you get in that game to-morrow I want you to play so that he and everybody else in Weston will be proud of you. You don't want to disgrace my brother in Weston, do you?'

"It was perfectly true that I did have a brother in Weston," my football friend continued, "and the angle I took worked all right. In fact it worked a little too well. After I'd been talking about Weston for quite a time this big halfback began to cry. I couldn't get him to stop. He was crying the next morning when we got out to the field and the doctor wouldn't let him attend the talk before the game. The doctor had to walk him up and down the sidelines to get him quieted down. Still he did go in and play a whale of a game."

I've always wanted to get an exact transcript of the parting words of a head coach to his men or his subsequent speech between the halves. I do know one but it was delivered to the squad of a comparatively small college. Just before the North Carolina eleven took the gridiron against Harvard their coach said to his players, "I want you boys to remember that every man on the Harvard team is a Republican."

But in this case oratory failed. The game was a conventional Republican



HE CALLED ON THEM TO REMEMBER STONEWALL JACKSON AND LEE

landslide. More effective was an address delivered to another Southern team which invaded the North. On this occasion the coach relinquished his privilege of providing the last words and called an old gentleman into the locker room. And the voice of the veteran rang out like a trumpet call. He spoke of the Civil War and of how the South had held the Yankees back for four years. There was a line not to be split by any Yankee plunger. And the sons of Rebs could do it again. The old man called on the excited youngsters to remember Stonewall Jackson and Robert E. Lee. They remembered and played gloriously but later there was hard feeling, for the discovery was made that the old man had never served with any of the great commanders whom he mentioned but had actually marched with Sherman from Atlanta to the Sea.

Coaches are fond of saying, "I want you boys to fight and to keep on fighting." If asked to explain his precise meaning the coach would undoubtedly answer with complete sincerity, "I told them to play hard." But it does not always work out that way. Only too often the instructions are taken all too literally. Football grows cleaner but Spotless Town is still a long march ahead. And when a young man deliberately injures an opposing player by the use of foul tactics there are accessories before the fact. Graduates who insisted loudly that "Dear Old—" must have a winning team, and coaches who said that defeat would sully the honor of the institution, must share in the blame. It isn't possible to rouse impressionable youth right up to the point of being ready to die for "Dear Old—" and not have a few of them, in the heat of battle, come to the decision that some of the foe ought at least to be maimed for the same good cause.

In spite of the stiff penalty provided by the rules, slugging continues. The officials can't see everything. Again and again players are tackled after they have crossed the sidelines and the whistle has blown. Men who are down get jumped upon. To be sure there is a difference between hard football and dirty football. When one watches the big games from way up on the rims of bowls and stadiums he is likely to have a good deal of trouble in detecting just where honest ardor ceases and foul play begins. I have observed, however, that star players tend to get injured a little more often than those of slighter worth. To be sure, the burdens of attack and defense fall more frequently to the stars, but this is not the only reason. Football, even under strict observance of the rules, permits the practice of disarming the enemy by injuring his most conspicuous players.

And in addition to physically dirty play there are other devices not wholly glamorous. A great college coach taught his scrub team to curse the varsity players most foully through an entire week of practice. "It worked well," explained a veteran of that eleven. "When we got into the big game that Saturday I never paid any attention to the names they were calling me. I don't care about being called names like that, but the practice made me used to it. The coach told us not to listen to anything but the signals and to go through with our assignments. They did all the cursing and we won the game."

And if all this is well founded, why is college football looked upon as the very flower and pattern of the highest sporting ideals in America? I don't know why. I like to watch college football and I can get emotional about it, but when I want moral stimulus and confirmation for my faith in the fundamental romanticism of man I go to see professional baseball. There have been scandals in the big leagues and even the most worthy and honest player is paid for his performances on the diamond. That doesn't matter. The distinction between the amateur and the professional cannot be reduced to a simple formula. In any field of endeavor your true and authentic amateur is a man who plays a game gleefully. I have

GRADUATES AND COACHES INSIST ON HAVING A WINNING TEAM

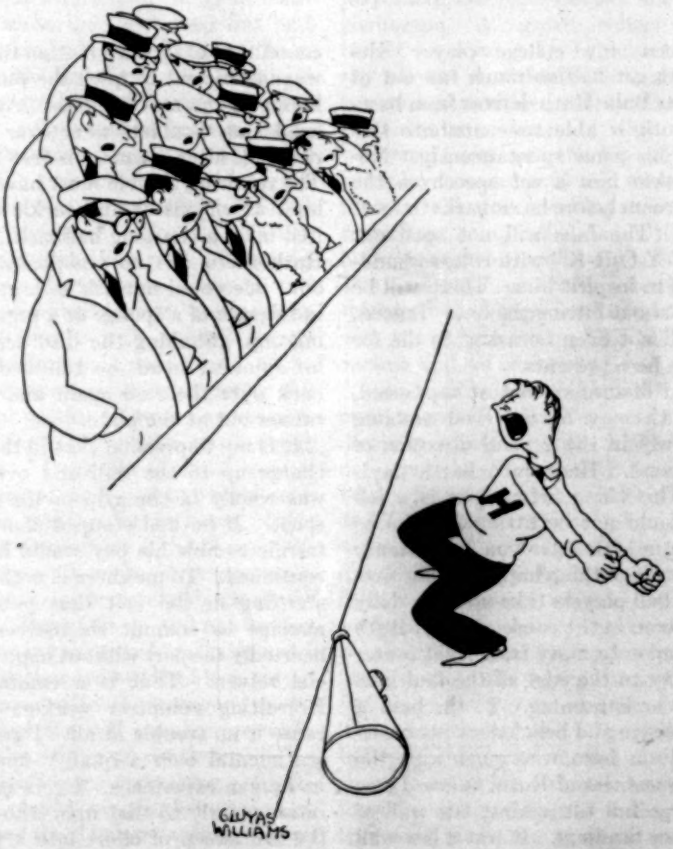
never seen any college player who seemed to get half so much fun out of football as Babe Ruth derives from baseball. Ruth is able to contribute this gusto to his game spontaneously. Nobody makes him a set speech in the dressing room before he embarks to meet his test. The fans will not spell out "N-E-W Y-O-R-K" with colored handkerchiefs to inspirit him. There will be no songs about hitting the line. Indeed, Ruth will not even be asked to die for the cause he represents.

Instead of running out at top speed, Babe Ruth may be observed ambling quite slowly in the general direction of the diamond. He approaches a day's work. This thing before him is a job and it would not be fitting for him to run. But a little later you may chance to see a strange thing happen. The professional ball players take up their daily tasks. Soon, in the cause of duty, Ruth is called upon to move from right center all the way to the edge of the foul line. And now he is running. To the best of my knowledge and belief there is no current gridiron hero who runs with the entire earnestness of Ruth. Once I saw him charge full tilt against the wall of the Yankee Stadium. It was a low wall and Ruth's big body was so inextricably committed to forward motion that a wall was insufficient to quell the purpose inhering in the moving mass. And so his head and shoulders went over the barrier and, after a time, his feet followed. The resulting tumble must have been at least as vicious as any tackle ever visited upon a charging halfback. But for Ruth there was no possibility of time out. He could not ask so much as the indulgence of a sponge or a paper drinking cup. Shaking the disorders out of his spinning head, he tumbled himself back over the wall again and threw a runner out at the plate.

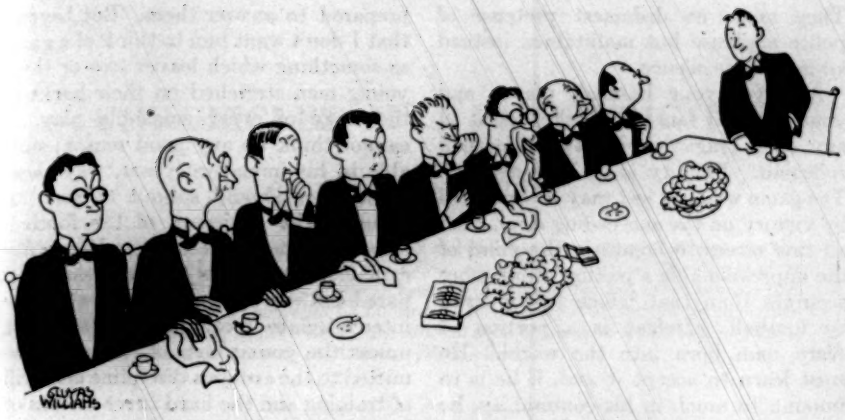
It is my impression that in the savage charge up to the wall and over, Ruth was wholly in the grip of the amateur spirit. If he had stopped short of the terrific tumble his pay would have still continued. To me there is nothing very startling in the fact that young men manage to commit themselves wholeheartedly to sport without hope of financial return. That is a commonplace. Recruiting volunteer workers for any cause is no trouble at all. I grow more sentimental over a quality much rarer in human experience. I give my admiration utterly to that man who can put the full sweep of effort into a job even though he is paid for it.

The bleeding right tackle making a last stand on the goal line is to me a lesser figure than Walter Johnson staving off the attack of the Giants in the final game of the World's Series. For, as I look at it, the bleeding tackle is fighting merely for the honor and glory of his college. My mind will not accept him as a satisfactory symbol of any larger issue. But when Johnson pitched I felt that the whole samurai tradition was at stake. Once I shook hands with Walter Johnson and he remarked that the late summer had been a handicap for pitchers. Nothing more was said and I got no direct personal emanation from the man which convinced me that I was in the presence of true greatness. It never was the real Johnson but only the fictional one which captured my imagination. He was the Prince of Pitchers and the Strikeout King. From Montana he came to the big leagues to throw a baseball faster than it had ever been thrown before. And as a boy I read of how the hands of his catcher were bruised and maimed by the ordeal of receiving this mighty delivery.

And so Johnson became a demigod, and I am always sad when the gods die. I saw Johnson sicken under torture as the Giants scourged him. I watched him driven to the dugout in defeat. And then I saw him come back from his



THE DUTY IS HEAVY UPON US AND WE MUST RENDER LIP-SERVICE



A SHOCKED SILENCE FOLLOWED HIS REMARKS

cavern revivified with all his old magic. This demigod was alive again and before me was played out a solar myth. So it had been with Buddha and Osiris. There is resiliency in the soul of man and he may lie down to bleed awhile and return refreshed. College football is just a game: professional baseball can rise to the height of a religious experience.

And it is a religion with only the scantiest bonds of ritual. It is incumbent upon the faithful to stretch in the seventh inning. Beyond complying with that one easy ceremony, the rooter has no responsibility in this Quaker meeting. If he chooses to sit silent that is permissible. Only when the spirit truly summons him is there any necessity of shouting. And so I find the emotion of a big-league ball game far more genuine and deep rooted than at any college football encounter. All shade and sensitivity is sacrificed in football by the pernicious practice of regimentation. "A long cheer with three Harvards on the end," cries the man in the white sweater through his megaphone. It is entirely possible that at the precise moments he calls upon me and my fellows to declare ourselves there is stored up in none of us more than a short cheer. It may even be that we have no inclination to cheer at all. Still, the duty is heavy upon us and we must render lip-service.

Before the afternoon is done the vilest sort of hypocrisy will be forced upon us. When the team in blue comes out upon the gridiron we shall all be called upon to render them a long cheer and to add three "Yale's" for courtesy. This is in violation of the deeper feelings of the human heart. We wish no success to Yale. At the mass meeting eloquent speakers have pointed out that it is imperative to the honor of Harvard that Yale shall be turned back from our gates. Already we have sung of our intention to smash, bleach, and ride them down. And here we are called upon to cheer them. It is all too distracting. Ambi-valency is not a condition which one cares to celebrate at the top of his voice.

The psychology of baseball is much more simple and more honest. The Washington rooter makes no pretense of wishing the Giants well. He pays them the compliment of thorough-going opposition. In the first game of the last World's Series two home runs were made by New York players. It was as if a lace handkerchief had been tossed into the Grand Canyon. This was an aggressive silence. A sincere horror and anguish struck forty thousand people into a muteness which fairly throbbed.

They made no dishonest pretense of polite applause but maintained instead an honorable silence.

And yet your baseball player and your baseball fan never take defeat in any such tragic spirit as the football collegian. Finality is so long delayed. The game which is lost may be cancelled by victory on the succeeding day. And all this serves to create in the mind of the impressionable a picture of life more accurate than that which is conveyed by football. Defeat is a portion of every man born into the world. He must learn to accept it and, if he is to amount to much in his community, he must get from every check a certain stimulus to appeal from the decision. There is no use crying over spilt milk because it is no great trouble to run around the corner and get another bottle. As our Salvation Army friends say, "A man may be down but he's never out." That won't do for a football proverb. A team can be both. Princeton, let us say, has just run rings around Harvard. The final whistle has blown. From this there can be no appeal. The issue may not be tried again. The teams will not meet for another year and then many a new figure will be in the lineup of either side. Here is a finality which is disturbing. The Harvard rooters have no recourse except to say that football is not so terribly important and that anyway Harvard still has a better English department.

I arranged that my small son should first come into contact with sport by watching professional baseball. One reason is wholly unconnected with ethics. When he asks questions I am better prepared to answer them. But beyond that I don't want him to think of a game as something which leaves two or three young men stretched on their backs in the wake of every smashing play. I cannot think up any good reason, suitable to his immature years, why these young men should submit to such an ordeal. The chairman of the football committee at a great Eastern University explained to a mass meeting that preparedness was the chief justification for intercollegiate football. He said that unless the young men of America submitted to the arduous discipline and drill of training and the hard fierce knocks of fighting football, we should have no adequate officers for our next war. But I won't want to use that reasoning on my small son. I have tried to enlist him in the determined ranks of those who insist that there will be no next war.

Only once did I ever hear of an official football speech which met with my entire approval. It was made by a Harvard captain. His team had lost to Yale but by a smaller score than was expected. It had been a fast and interesting game. At the dinner when the team broke training the captain said, "We lost to Yale but I think we had a satisfactory season. We have had fun out of football and it seems to me that ought to be the very best reason for playing the game."

A shocked silence followed his remarks. He was never invited to come to Cambridge to assist in the coaching of any future Harvard eleven. His heresy was profound. He had practically intimated that being defeated was less than tragic.

CHRONICLES OF A PLAYWRIGHT

BY JEROME K. JEROME

Dramatist, editor, and novelist; humorist and philosopher; author (at thirty) of *Three Men in a Boat* and *Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow*, and (at forty-eight) of *The Passing of the Third Floor Back*, Mr. Jerome has always been worth listening to; and never more so than now, in his sixty-seventh year, when he sits down to tell us story after story of his adventures in the London Theater, in the friendly and informal style in which he would talk to a group of intimates around the fireplace at Marlow.—*Editor's Note.*

A LADY on one occasion asked me why I did not write a play. "I am sure, Mr. Jerome," she said with a bright encouraging smile, "that you could write a play."

I told her I had written nine; that six of them had been produced; that three of them had been successful both in England and America; that one of them was still running at the Comedy Theater and approaching its two-hundredth night.

Her eyebrows went up in amazement.

"Dear me," she said, "you do surprise me."

George R. Sims told me that he once dined some friends at the Savoy. Over the coffee he asked them if they would like to go to a theater and they said they would. He took them to a play of his own. For some reason which Sims could not explain they did not like it. At the end of the first act one of them, turning to him, said:

"Rather dull stuff this. Don't you find it so?"

"Well, now you come to mention it, perhaps it is—a trifle," agreed Sims.

"Let's go on to the Empire," suggested another.

The proposal was carried *nem. con.* and, leaving their programs behind them, the party rose and made their way out of the theater noisily and cheerfully, followed by Sims walking soberly.

"It used to annoy me," added Sims, "that not one theater-goer in a hundred ever takes the trouble to read the author's name. That evening I was glad of it."

"Barbara" was my first play. I am informed that nowadays managers read plays by unknown authors. In my young days they didn't. I read it to Rose Norreys one evening at her little flat in Chelsea Gardens and, good comrade that she was, she took it herself to Charles Hawtrey and stood over him until he had finished it. He wrote me, asking me to come and see him the following Tuesday at twelve o'clock noon—he underlined "noon." He was running "The Private Secretary" at the Globe. I got there twenty minutes early and walked up and down Hollywell Street until I heard Big Ben strike twelve. The stage doorkeeper said Mr. Hawtrey wasn't in. I said I would wait. The doorkeeper—a kindly soul, I wish I could remember his name—put me a chair by the fire and gave me a thumbed copy of *The Talisman*. He said that, speaking for himself, he considered it the best of all Scott's novels. Hawtrey turned up at a quarter past three. The stage doorkeeper introduced us and explained things.

"I'm so sorry," said Hawtrey. "I thought it was Monday."

His first wife told me that the night before their wedding his best man had (unknown to Hawtrey) put his watch on

an hour and a quarter, with the result that he got there five minutes too soon; and in certain circles he used to be known as "the late Mr. Charles." But he was always so charming about it that one generally forgave him.

He told me that he liked my little play immensely. There was only one fault he had to find: it was too short. I record the fact as being the only known instance in the history of the stage of a manager suggesting to an author that his play was not long enough. I promised to write in an extra scene.

"My brother George will see you about terms," he concluded as we shook hands. "He will want you to sell it outright. Take my tip and don't do it. It's just the sort of thing to catch on with the amateurs."

The "Producer" had not then arrived. He was an American invention. The stage manager, together with the prompter and the author, used just to worry it out. I have never been able myself to detect any difference. "Dot" Boucicault was one of the first, and for straightforward work is still among the best. If anything he is too painstaking. His method at rehearsal is to play all the parts himself, leaving the actor to copy him. On a certain occasion he had been coaching Gertrude Kingston, after this manner, for about a fortnight; and then one morning, taking her aside, he asked her how she liked her part.

"What part?" asked Gertrude Kingston.

"What part?" repeated Boucicault astonished. "Why *your* part—the Countess."

"Oh, that," answered Miss Kingston, "I thought you were playing that."

I take it Du Maurier's dictum really sums up the matter: That a play that is worth producing produces itself.

"Barbara" ran, on and off, for years and amateurs still play it. Following Charles Hawtrey's advice I had refused to sell it outright, though his brother George went up to a hundred pounds and the temptation was sore.

"Fennel," a one-act play which I adapted from the French of François Coppée, was chiefly remarkable for introducing Allan Aynesworth to the London stage. He played Sandro, the lover. I see that I describe him in the script as "a fine dashing good-looking young fellow." Aynesworth was all that, right enough; but on the first night he got stage fright. I was watching from the wings. I could see him getting more and more nervous and when he came to his big speech his memory snapped. I had prided myself upon that speech. I had done my best to put Coppée's poetry into English blank verse. It was all about music and the sunrise and Heaven and Love—(some two pages of it altogether. I could have forgiven him for forgetting it and drying up but, to my horror, he went on. He had it fixed in his mind that until the old man returned home he had to stand in the center of the stage and talk poetry. And he did it. Bits of it, here and there, were mine; most of it his own; a good deal of it verses and quotations that, I take it, he had learned at his mother's knee. I shouted to Stuart Dawson, who was playing the old man, to go on and stop him. But he would finish and threw such fervor into the last few laps that at the end he received a fine round of applause.

"Sorry I forgot the exact lines," he said to me as he came off. "But I was determined not to let you down."

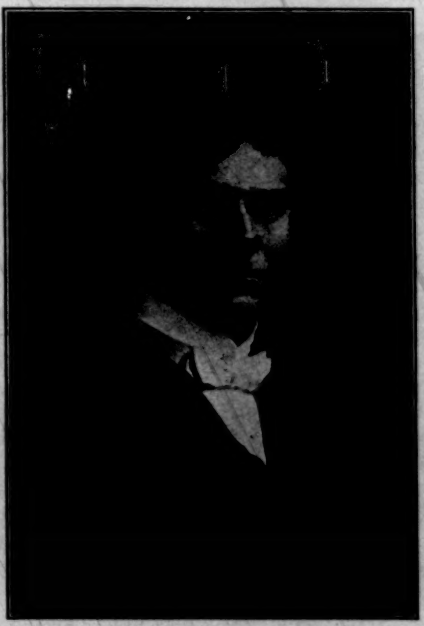
"Woodbarrow Farm" was my first full-sized play. Gertrude Kingston produced it at a matinée, playing herself the "Adventuress." The trial matinée was a useful institution. I think it a pity it has dropped out. The manager would lend the theater in return for an option on the play; and the leading parts could generally be arranged for on a like understanding. At the cost of about a hundred pounds a play could be put before the public and judged: in the only way a play can be judged—through the test tube of an audience. Three out of four, in spite of friendly stalls, were seen to be no good; the fourth won the prize.

Bernard Partridge was the hero of "Woodbarrow Farm." Conway had been cast for the part originally. That was another sad story. He had made his name as Romeo to Adelaide Neilson's Juliet: the most Shakespearian Juliet I have ever seen, though Phyllis Neilson-Terry some years ago ran her close. It was plain before rehearsals were a week old that poor Conway would have to be replaced; and the grim task of breaking it to him fell upon me. I called upon him early in the morning at the Adelphi Hotel. He was standing with his back to me when I entered the room, leaning his head against the mantelpiece.

"I know what you've come for," he said, without turning round. "It's my own fault. I thought I'd pulled myself together. I must have another try—later on."

There is no catch in being the one to put an actor out of his part. Everybody tries to shift the job on to somebody else. There was a young actress, I remember, at Terry's Theater. She had been cast for a rattling good part on an unwise friend's recommendation, and had agreed to rehearse on approval. It was her first London engagement. She was no good and we all of us agreed that the Producer was the fit and proper person to handle the situation. The Producer flatly refused; and as we still worried him he gave us his reason.

"I had to do it once, some years ago now," he said. "She was an angelic-looking little creature. We had done the usual damn silly trick of just choosing her because of her appearance. She wasn't bad, but she hadn't the experience. The part was too big for her altogether. She took it quite nicely. I went round to see her in the evening. She had a bed-sitting-room in a street off the King's Road, Chelsea. We sat and chatted, afterwards, about the British drama in general, and she made me a cup of coffee. I flattered myself I had got out of it cheaply. She drowned herself that night—walked down the steps by Battersea Bridge into the river. This child reminds me of her. Somebody else will have to tell her."



AN EARLY PHOTOGRAPH OF MR. JEROME

Nobody did. We let her play the part. She wasn't good.

Dan Frohman took the play for America. He wrote me that he was staying at the Hotel Victoria and would call to see me. We were living then in Alpha Place. My wife thought it would be an artful plan to lunch him well first and talk business with him afterwards. He accepted our invitation. We felt we had him in our hands. It was a gorgeous lunch. There was caviar and a stuffed bird and tricky things in French. I saw to the cocktails myself, and after there was Château Lafitte and champagne. I can still see my wife's face when Frohman in his grave emphatic way explained that his digestion did not allow him to lunch: but might he have a few of the greens and some dry toast with a glass of Apollinaris. But he smoked a cigar with me afterwards and gave me good terms for the play.

The brothers Frohman, Charles and Dan, were good men to do business with. Their word was their bond. Charles used to say that no contract was ever drawn that a clever man could not get out of if he wanted to. Towards the end I never bothered him to sign anything. We would fix the terms over a cigar, and shake hands. He was a natural-born sentimentalist (most Jews are). He spent a good deal of his time when in England at Marlow where now stands a memorial to him. I had a house upon the hills and Haddon Chambers used to rent a cottage at Bisham, near the Abbey. On a sunny afternoon one often found Charles sitting on his own grave in Marlow Churchyard—or rather on the spot he hoped would one day be his grave: a pleasant six-foot-into-four of English soil under the great willow that overhangs the river. He was still in negotiation for it the last time that I talked to him there. He went down in the *Lusitania* the year following.

Frohman never pretended to know what the public wanted, and had a contempt for anyone who did.

"I'll tell you what a play is going to do after I've seen the second night's returns," he would say. "Some people will tell you before: but they're mostly fools."

First-night receptions tell nothing; first-nighters are a race apart. Like the Greeks they hanker after a new thing. The general public, on the other hand, are faithful to their old loves. I met Arthur Shirley one afternoon. A new and original drama of his was to be produced that evening at Drury Lane.

"Feeling cheerful?" I asked him.

"Tolerably," he told me, "there are three rattling good situations in it."

"Capital," I said, "you think they will go all right?"

"Well they ought to," he answered, "they always have."

I wrote "The MacHaggis" in collaboration with Eden Phillpotts. Penley accepted it but fell ill and handed the part over to Weeden Grossmith. Our heroine shocked the critics—she rode a bicycle: it was unwomanly then to ride a bicycle. There were so many things in those days that were unwomanly to do; it must have been quite difficult to be a woman and remain so day after day. She smoked a cigarette. The Devil must have been in us. Up till then only the adventuress had ever smoked a cigarette. In the last act she said "damn"; she said it twice. Poor Clement Scott nearly fell out of the *Daily Telegraph*. Once before, it is true, a lady (Mrs. Huntley I think) had said "damn" upon the stage but that was in a translation from the French. No one dreamed the day would come when Mrs. Pat Campbell would say "bloody." But it is an age of progress, we are told. One blushes at the thought of what they may say next. She cost me a friend, that heroine of ours. By chance we christened the hussy Ewretta; and it happened to be the name of an actress friend of mine, Ewretta Lawrence. She wouldn't believe we hadn't done it with *malice prepense*. She never spoke to me again, for which I am sorry. It is always with fear and trembling that one chooses names for one's less immaculate characters. During the run of Pinero's "Mrs. Ebbsmith," a real Mrs. Ebbsmith committed suicide. She thought that Pinero had been told her story and had used it.

Phillpotts and myself had bad luck over "The MacHaggis." It was doing well when Penley suddenly closed the theater. His illness, it turned out, was mental.

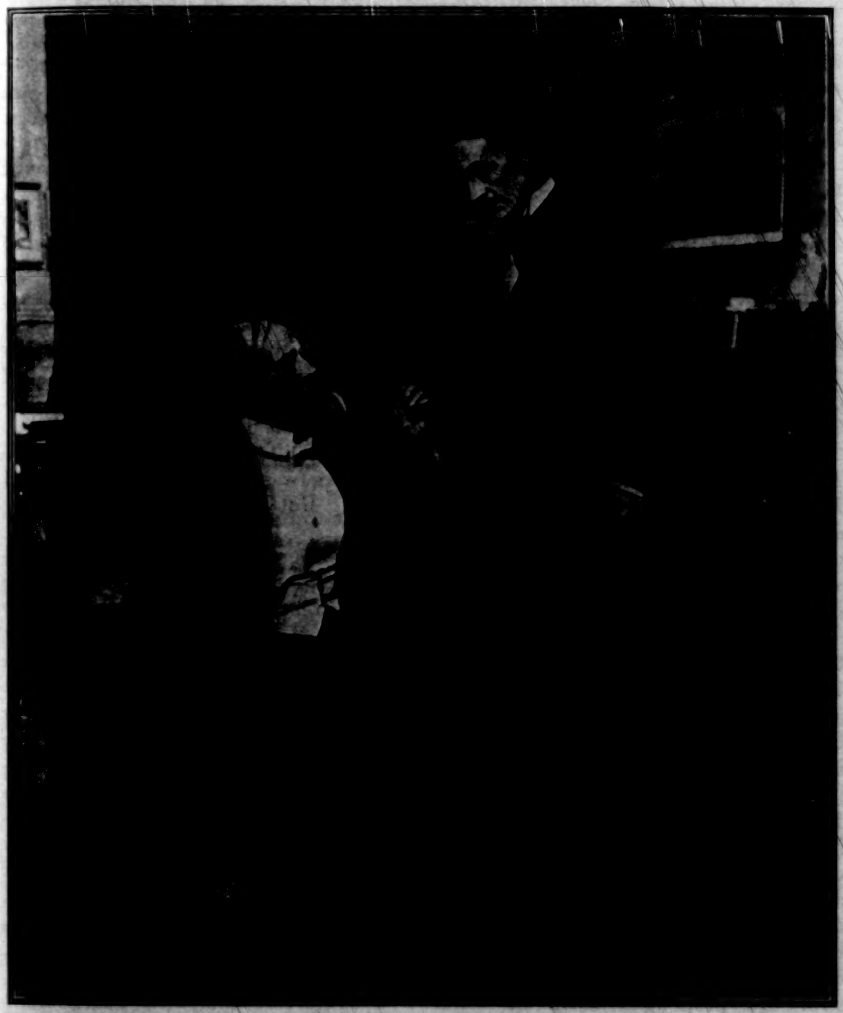
One of the things I best remember in "The MacHaggis" was Reeves Smith's performance of a cheerful idiot. He was a delightful actor. He went to America soon after and they never let him come back. I met him there when on a lecturing tour. He was playing with Nazimova. I went behind to see him.

"Forgive me," I said, as soon as his dresser had left the room, "but aren't

you making him rather too noisy?" They were playing Ibsen—"The Master Builder," I think.

"Great heavens," he answered. "You don't think it's my idea, do you? It's the new method over here. Everybody has to shout at the top of his voice except the Star. 'How quiet and natural she is,' they say. 'What a contrast.' Clever idea—Gillette invented it."

Alla Nazimova was drawing all New York. I found her somewhat changed from the quiet simple girl who with her husband (they spelled the name "Nazimof" then) had knocked at our door in London with a letter of introduction from friends of ours in Russia. They had got themselves into trouble with the political police and had had to cut and run with barely time to pack a handbag. She spoke German but he spoke only Russian. They looked little more than



FORBES-ROBERTSON (STANDING) IN "THE PASSING OF THE THIRD FLOOR BACK"

boy and girl; and he in his way was as beautiful as she was. That first evening we taught him an English sentence. He had said it in Russian, his eyes fixed on my wife. Alla translated it into German, and then we told him the English for it, which was: "You remind me of my first love." He repeated it till he had it perfect; and subsequently quite a number of women mentioned to me casually that he seemed to know only one English sentence. We chaffed him about it. He maintained it was not humbug. All beautiful women reminded him of his first love. But his last love! there was no one like her, and kneeling he kissed Alla Nazimof's hand. He was rather a lovable, childish person.

I took them to Tree and we fixed up a benefit performance for them at the Haymarket; afterwards I got Frohman interested and he fathered them into America. For some reason the boy went back to Russia and was killed in a pogrom. The first person she asked me about when I saw her in New York was "Madame Needles," as she had always called a small fox terrier of ours. They had been great friends and had played "hunt the slipper" together. Madame Needles would go outside the room while Madame Nazimof would hide one of her shoes and then open the door. Only once Needles failed to find it, and that was when Alla had sprinkled scent upon it.

Another play Phillpotts and I wrote together was "The Prude's Progress." Bernard Partridge was to have played an up-to-date journalist who knew everything and was not ashamed of it: an amusing fellow and Partridge would have played him to perfection. Alas and alack, I listened to advice. The author who listens to advice is lost. During the second rehearsal your manager draws you aside. He has been talking the play over with his mother-in-law. It seems that she likes it immensely. She has only one suggestion to make—or rather, two. He propounds them at some length. You explain that the adoption of either would necessitate the rewriting of the piece. "Well, better do that, my dear boy," he answers, "than have a failure. I'm only advising you for your own good." The producer does not agree with the manager's mother-in-law. His advice is: "cut the other woman out altogether. Lighten the play and save a salary." He slips his arm through yours. "If it was only a question of art," he continues in a friendly undertone, "I daresay you're right. Unfortunately, we've got to consider the great B. P. Now I've had twenty years' experience. . ." Later on the solicitor to the syndicate drops in and watches a rehearsal. He stumbles over the cat and reaches the stage. He has thought of an alteration that may save the play. The next afternoon the stage doorkeeper stops you on your way out; he also has been thinking the play over with the idea of helping you. They all know what the public want and how to give it to them: it is everybody's secret except the author's. I once overheard a producer talking to a friend concerning one of Barrie's plays.

"It was all no good," he was saying. "He wouldn't take my advice. Of course the piece was successful—in a way, I admit. But think what it might have been."

Over the play proper I had learned to be firm; but I was young at producing and I listened to George Hawtrey. He meant well. He was a dear fellow in many respects. He always did mean well. He had discovered a genius made by the Creator on purpose to play our journalist. Partridge was my friend, he would not stand in the way of my making my fortune—of my making Phillpott's fortune—of my making everybody's fortune. To cut a sad story short, I put it to Partridge and of course he agreed. But he never forgave me, and I have always felt ashamed of myself for having done it.

I wrote three plays for Marie Tempest, two of which she never played in

and the third she wished she hadn't. It was her own fault: she wanted a serious play and I gave her one. She loved it when I read it to her—"Esther Castways" was the name of it. She was magnificent in it and on the first night received an ovation, but of course the swells wouldn't have it. She had made a groove for herself and her public were determined she should keep it. We ought to have known that, all of us. I didn't get on with her at rehearsals. I wore a red suit which I rather fancied, myself, but somehow it maddened her; and I was obstinate and wouldn't change it, though she offered to buy it from me that she might burn it. A pity Marie Tempest ever got into that groove. She was a great actress pinned down to frocks and frivolity. Lillah McCarthy gave me an insight into female psychology when she told me that the first thing she did with a new part was to dress it. She could not imagine how the woman would think and feel till she had visualized the clothes she should wear. Then she began to understand the woman, working from the clothes inwards.

I can understand because the Stranger in "The Passing of the Third Floor Back" came to me like that. I followed a stooping figure, passing down a foggy street, pausing every now and then to glance up at a door. I did not see his face. It was his clothes that worried me. There was nothing out of the way about them. I could not make out why it was they seemed remarkable. I lost him at a corner, where the fog hung thick, and found myself wondering what he would have looked like if he had turned round and I had seen his face. I could not get him out of my mind, wandering about the winter streets, and gradually he grew out of those curious clothes of his.

"Miss Hobbs" (or the "Kissing of Kate," to give the play its original title), produced by Charles Frohman in America with Annie Russell as Kate and wonderful old Mrs. Gilbert as Auntie, was my first real money-making success—if a gentleman may mention such detail. She has been a good child to me, God bless her. She was a great success in Germany. I was living in Dresden at the time and the Kaiser sent me his congratulations through an official of the Saxon Court, who brought it to me in a big envelope: so he couldn't have been all bad. How the coming of the Great War was kept from us common people may be instanced by the production of my play "The Great Gamble" at the Haymarket six months before the guns went off. The scene was laid in Germany. One of our chief characters was a dear old German Professor. German students in white caps sang German folk songs and drank lager beer. We had incidental music, specially written, in the German style. The hero had been educated in Germany and the heroine's mother's co-respondent was an Austrian. For a solid month we rehearsed that play without a suspicion that the Chancelleries of Europe were one and all making their secret preparations to render it a failure.

Rehearsals are trying periods. Everybody seems to be wearing his nerves outside his skin. The question whether the actor should take three steps to the right, and pause with his left hand on the back of chair, center, before proposing to the heroine; or whether he should do it from the hearthrug, with his left elbow on the mantelpiece, may threaten the friendship of a lifetime. The author wants him to do it from the hearthrug—is convinced that from there and there only can he convey to the heroine the depth and sincerity of his passion. The producer is positive that a true gentleman would walk round the top of the table and do it from behind a chair. The actor comes to the rescue. He "feels" he can do it only from the left-hand bottom corner of the table.

"Oh, well, if you feel as strongly about it as all that, my dear boy," says the producer, "that ends it. It's you who've got to play the part."

"Do you know," says the author, "I

think he's right. It does seem to come better from there."

The rehearsal proceeds. Five minutes later the argument whether a father would naturally curse his child before or after she has taken off her hat provides a new crisis.

I wrote "The Passing of the Third Floor Back" for David Warfield. I worked it out first as a short story. It was John Murray, the publisher, who put the idea into my head of making it into a play; and when I saw Warfield in "The Music Master" it seemed to me he was just the actor to play it. He would not have had the dignity and compelling force of Forbes-Robertson. He would have made the character win rather through tenderness and appeal. I was on a lecturing tour in America and had my agent, Miss Marbury, put me into touch with Warfield's manager, Belasco. It was in a Pullman car between Washington and New York that I sketched out the idea and it engaged him. We were both doubtful as to how the public would receive it but I thought I could do it without giving offence. Belasco agreed to trust me and on my return to England I got to work upon it.

It was not an easy play to write: one had to feel it rather than think it. I was living in a lonely part of the Chiltern Hills with great open spaces all around me, and that helped; and at last it was finished. I had arranged to return to America to produce "Sylvia of the Letters," a play I had written for Grace George; and I took "The Passing" with me.

MR. JEROME SPEAKING AT A POLITICAL MEETING

I read it to Warfield and Belasco late one night at Belasco's theater in New York. We had the house to ourselves and afterwards we adjourned to Warfield's club for supper. It was about three o'clock in the morning and the only thing we could get was cold beef and pickles. They were both tremendously impressed and we found ourselves talking in whispers. I fancy Belasco got nervous about it later on. We fixed things up next morning at Miss Marbury's office, and he asked me to see Percy Anderson, the artist, when I got back to England and get him to make sketches for the characters. It was while

he was drawing them, in his studio at Folkestone, that one morning Forbes-Robertson (who had a house there) dropped in upon him. Forbes was greatly interested in the sketches and Anderson showed him the play.

Forbes-Robertson wrote me telling me of this, saying that if by any chance arrangements between myself and Belasco fell through would I come and talk to him. His letter arrived a day after I had had one from Belasco, making it clear that he did not want, if possible, to be bound to his contract; so for answer I called upon Forbes-Robertson in Bedford Square and read the play to him and his wife. He too was nervous, but Gertrude Elliott swept all doubts aside and ended the matter.

We got together as perfect a cast as I think any play has ever had: Ernest Hendrie as the old Bookmaker, Ian Robertson as the Major, Edward Sass as the Jew, Agnes Thomas as Mrs. Sharpe, and Haidee Wright as the Painted Lady were all wonderful; and Gertrude Elliott played the Slavey. I was afraid at first that her beauty and grace would hamper her; but she overcame these drawbacks and, even at rehearsal, invested the little slut with a spirituality that at times transfigured her.

"We must have someone supremely beautiful for the part of Vivien," said Forbes-Robertson. "There are six women in the play; four of them have to be middle-aged and my wife has to disguise herself. It's our only chance."

I thought of Alice Crawford. Time was pressing and we sent her a wire. She had just left for a ball at the Piccadilly Hotel.

"You must go to the ball," said Forbes.

I went as I was in a blue-serge suit, brown boots, and a collar that I had been wearing since eight o'clock in the morning. I made a sensation in the ballroom. I gathered that the people round about took me for a policeman in unnecessary plain clothes; but I spotted Alice Crawford and beckoned her outside. A gentleman came up and asked if he could be of any use—I take it the idea of bail was in his mind.

We produced the play at Harrogate. The audience there mistook it for a farce. It was by the author of *Three Men in a Boat*, so they had been told. That evening the Robertsons and myself partook of a melancholy supper.

In London on the first night the curtain fell to dead silence which lasted so long that everybody thought the play must be a failure, and my wife began to cry. And then suddenly the cheering came and my wife dried her eyes.

I was not present myself. I have shirked my own first nights ever since a play of mine was produced by Willard at the Garrick—I thought the applause unanimous but was received with a burst of booing. The argument is that if an author is willing to be applauded he must not object to being hissed. It may be logic but it isn't sense: as well say that because a man does not mind being patted on the back he ought not to object to being kicked. I remember the first night of one of Jones's plays. There was a difference of opinion and Jones very properly did not appear. In the street I overheard some critics from the gallery talking:

"Why didn't he come out," said one, "and take his punishment like a man?"

Forbes-Robertson was doubtful about taking the play to America. It was his sister-in-law, Maxine Elliott, who insisted. It was at her theater in New York that he opened.

Mathieson Lang took it East. In China a most respectable Mandarin came round to see him afterwards and thanked him.

"Had I been intending to do this night an evil deed," he said, "I could not have done it. I should have had to put it off until to-morrow."

[*A chapter of Mr. Jerome's editorial reminiscences will be published next month.*]

BEHIND THE BLOCS

A New Explanation of Our Growing Sectionalism

BY CHARLES MERZ

HERE are three characteristic traits of American politics at the present moment, all of which can be related to one central fact at Washington: bolting the party in the West; damning the government in the East; forgetting about States' Rights in the South.

You cannot open your evening newspaper, see a news reel at the movies, or tune in on a radio station without finding something which bears upon these tendencies. A Congressman from North Dakota demands that his party "do something" for the farmer, and his party retaliates by taking away his badge and not asking him to its next convention. An after-dinner speaker arises in the East (as Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler recently arose) and asserts that American democracy is fast becoming American despotism because we have too much government at Washington. A Senator (Mr. Smith) from the state of South Carolina, which first adopted an ordinance of secession from the Union, now appears in Congress and submits a bill which authorizes the federal authority of the Union to push its way into a new field of state affairs, and spend thirty million dollars doing it.

Incidents like these suggest three tendencies:

In the West we have an agrarian radicalism which demands that Washington bestir itself and take a greater interest in the troubles of the farmer; assume more power to deal with railways, trusts, and middlemen; lend millions on farm mortgages; become increasingly a great central agency of control and regulation. In some such faith as this lies the chief strength of the La Follette movement.

In the East, meantime, this program meets with signs of rapidly increasing irritation. Give Washington more power? Not much. Washington is drunk with power now. We hear most, to be sure, from those who are best able to express themselves; and this ordinarily means members of a well-to-do section of society who have access to the news columns of the press through one public forum or another. But these people—possessors of more than average influence—are emphatic in their views. They do not want more government. They want less government. Especially, they want less government in business. They want less taxes. They emphatically do not want more taxes, wherewith to set the government up in banking ventures or insurance schemes, or to buy the excess wheat of Western farmers. They like the Mellon plan. They like economy at Washington, and economy which includes lopping off whole government activities as well as saving on the blotters and ink-wells. They like federal retrenchment. They like being left alone. A popular address for any bankers', merchants', or manufacturers' convention east of Chicago could be written around the two phrases "don't meddle with business" and "government is best when it governs least."

Then, in the South, where loyalty to States' Rights is traditional and, theoretically, the doctrine still survives that it is dangerous to pile too many burdens on the shoulders of one government in

Washington, we find Congressmen headed for the Capitol, forgetful of States' Rights and bent upon putting Washington up to all manner of new things it has never tried before. Representative Tillman of Arkansas appears in Congress and proposes that the federal government invade the States with federal schools. Senator Harris of Georgia turns to the railways, and wishes the federal government to be in so many places at one time that anywhere and everywhere it can forbid the use of wooden cars. Representative Upshaw of Georgia asks the federal government to come into every local theater and, with one commission centralized at Washington, censor the morals of the movies. From the South, all traditions of States' Rights notwithstanding, comes a great deal of that leadership which brushes States' Rights aside and centralizes in Washington more authority than Washington has ever had before.

This change in point of view is recent; but it is unmistakable. For it is Southern leadership, plus Western leadership, which has taken away from the States —for one thing—power to decide whether or not they will have Prohibition, and has conferred that power on the nation. It is Southern leadership, plus Western leadership, which has sent the federal government into the money market—to loan many million dollars on farm mortgages. It is Southern and Western leadership which has set the federal government building roads and teaching schools, taking over responsibilities which the States once carried for themselves, acquiring each year authority which previously belonged to States, to cities, or remained undelegated.

In the shift of the South toward federalism, in the demand of the West for farm aid, in the reluctance with which the East views each new dollar spent in Washington and each new onward thrust of federal power, we have three real factors in the political scene of 1925.

The fact at Washington which relates these factors is the federal subsidy.

For many years this country had no federal subsidies. The States managed their own affairs and paid their own expenses as they went along. The federal government was content to stay in Washington. Even down to 1914, federal subsidies to the States were only a small item in the national budget, amounting in that year to six and a half million dollars, and voted to the States largely to take care of land-grant colleges and the National Guard. Six and a half million was less than one per cent of the government's expenses in 1914.

In 1914, however, came the Smith-Lever Act—and the outlay for subsidies took a new turn upward. The Smith-Lever Act had to do with agricultural extension work; it voted direct subsidies to the States for demonstrations in farm methods and home economics. Originally Congress appropriated $1,080,000 for this purpose. But what Congress originally appropriates is very likely to be doubled or redoubled later, and the Smith-Lever Act has grown each year. Last year the appropriation was $5,880,000.

Meantime, with the Smith-Lever Act as a precedent, Congress began enacting other laws conferring other subsidies upon the States for other local purposes. In 1916 came the Federal Aid for Roads Act. Beginning modestly, this act has grown each year until for 1924 the Budget Bureau has it down for $63,000,000. Other subsidy laws have followed. And with the direct subsidies have come increased appropriations for such purposes as rivers and harbors, reclamation work, etc. Money spent in this latter way cannot strictly be classed as a subsidy, since the federal government retains title to the property which its appropriation improves. Nevertheless $100,000 voted to dredge the Hudson is actually as much a matter of state aid as $100,000 voted under the Act of 1916 to help New York build a new state road. And so, if we wish to measure the full scope of federal contributions to the States, we shall count subsidies both direct and indirect;

and for the year 1924 those subsidies were as follows:

Direct subsidies—	
Smith-Lever Act of 1914	$ 5,880,000
Federal Aid for Roads Act of 1916	63,375,000
Kahn-Chamberlain Act of 1918	93,627
Smith-Hughes Act of 1919	5,188,952
Industrial Rehabilitation Act of 1920	551,265
Sheppard-Towner Act of 1921	847,536
Federal support of Agricultural Colleges	2,550,000
Federal support of Experiment Stations	1,440,000
State Fund under Mineral Leasing Act	2,787,411
State Fund under National Forest Act	1,321,422
State Fund from Sale of Public Lands	17,008
State Fund under Water Power Act	2,063
Federal aid, National Guard	19,466,889
Indirect subsidies—	
Rivers and Harbors work	30,421,300
Public Buildings	506,600
Reclamation Projects	10,691,000
National Parks	1,624,065
Federal Aid, Forest Roads and Trails	39,000,000
Federal Aid, Forest Fire Prevention, etc.	1,743,202
Total	$187,507,340

This figure of $187,507,340 is instructive. It represents the entirely novel degree to which the federal government now stakes the States to projects which were once thought to be the States' own business. We have come so far with subsidies that one dollar in every seven which Congress appropriates (aside from more or less routine sums to pay interest on the national debt and provide for the national defense) is appropriated nowadays for State assistance.

It is the last ten years that have worked this change. We have a new view of the federal treasury as a place for the States to come when they need funds. They need funds constantly. And in the difference between what one State pays the treasury in taxes, and another State takes away from the treasury in subsidies, lies one explanation of those three current tendencies in West, East, and South described above.

For there is nothing mathematical about subsidies. They do not work themselves out in such a way that the State which pays most receives most in return, or the most populous State is granted appropriations in proportion to its numbers. What determines the size of subsidies is a variety of local conditions plus the effectiveness of bloc organization in Washington. Consider, for example, the cases of Nevada and New York.

New York, with its concentration of capital and its banking interests, is the greatest tax-paying State in the union. Last year it paid $474,000,000 in taxes on personal and corporation income. It received in return $4,020,445 under the six subsidy laws (Smith-Lever Act, Federal Aid for Roads Act, etc.) which Congress has recently enacted. This is a return of less than one per cent on its tax payment.

Nevada, meantime, paid into the federal treasury last year the sum of $408,793, but took out of the federal treasury (under these same six subsidy measures) the sum of $885,759—a return of over 216 per cent on its investment. Being a member of the Union, in the case of Nevada, is a very profitable venture.

Now the difference between returns in these two cases—the quite amazing difference between 0.84 per cent and 216.67 per cent—is an exceptional instance in the working out of subsidies, and no other two States show such a striking variation. Nevertheless, these figures are indicative of a certain general tendency. And if the test of tax-payment and subsidy-return is applied to the whole country it will be seen, I think, that if New York and Nevada are two extreme cases they are none the less cases which represent a very

genuine difference between the East and West.

It is a comparison of different *sections* of the country, rather than of individual States, which affords the best test. In the figures which follow I have used the conventional groupings:

"New England" comprises the six States from Connecticut to Maine.

"Middle Atlantic" comprises New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey.

"Middle West" comprises Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan.

"South" includes all States below the Mason and Dixon line, and as far west as Texas.

"West" includes all States from the Mississippi to the Coast States, the South excluded.

"Pacific" comprises Washington, Oregon, and California.

This table shows, first, what each section paid in federal taxes on personal and corporation income in 1924; second, what each section received in the form of federal subsidies in 1924; and third, what percentage this receipt bears to the sum paid in taxes:

	Tax Payment	*Subsidy Return*	*Per Cent of Return*
New England	$160,383,650	$ 4,195,619	2.61
Middle Atlantic	715,225,737	14,546,650	2.04
Middle West	368,817,316	18,075,740	4.89
South	173,775,142	39,370,931	22.65
West	114,173,601	33,106,601	28.99
Pacific	97,896,118	9,992,545	10.21

Two figures stand out here—the figures for the South and West.

While the factory States of New England, the great tax-paying States of New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, the compact tier of industrial and farming States of the Middle West show returns at such low figures as 2.61 per cent, 2.04 per cent, and 4.89 per cent, the South comes back from Washington with 22.65 per cent of what it pays in taxes, and the West with 28.99 per cent.

The Pacific Coast fares better than the East. But it is a poor third. Between the South and West on one side, and the rest of the country on the other, there is a wide gulf here in a very fundamental matter of taxation and division of receipts.

It is surely a factor of some political importance that the West profits from subsidies no less than fourteen times as substantially as do the chief tax-paying States of the Atlantic seaboard.

Now, it does not necessarily follow that because the South and West fare so well in subsidies they are taking an unfair advantage of their neighbors. If States like Nevada and Arkansas are now enriching themselves at the expense of States like New York and Pennsylvania, there are several pertinent considerations worth writing into the record.

For one thing it is obvious that the great Eastern States, as investment markets and as gateways to foreign trade, derive an incidental profit from any subsidy which raises property values in the South and West. New York City, for example, is a port and a market which owes much of its prosperity to the prosperity of its hinterland. Nevada benefits most from a subsidy spent in Nevada; but New York is not entirely a loser.

In the second place it is, of course, true that direct title to some of the property which is improved through subsidies in the Western and Southern States is held in the financial East.

And in the third place, it would be folly to forget the tariff. For years, admittedly, the industrial States of the East have enjoyed protection for their industries in a competitive world market. They have had the taxing power of the government applied for their own benefit, in another form of "subsidy"—some men think rightly, others wrongly—but the fact is that the thing has happened. And if the South and West now manipulate federal financial policy to some special sectional advantage it is not without a precedent.

Such points as these are relevant to the argument about subsidies: the argument as to whether sectional advantages for the South and West are now war-

ranted or are not warranted. But that argument I do not attempt to touch. The purpose of this paper is neither to defend subsidies nor attack them. It is rather to discuss what happens and note briefly its results.

And certainly in these variations of sectional advantage and disadvantage we have a factor which belongs in any consideration of the political line-up that exists to-day:

Here is the East, receiving in subsidies a pittance in return for what it pays in taxes. Subsidies increase, and yet the East does worse and worse for itself in Washington. For the East can never profit heavily from subsidies. It can never profit heavily because subsidies are, and will be, voted chiefly for such projects as forestation, new roads, and reclamation work—of which the East, comparatively, has little. Besides, the East pays such enormous taxes that federal bequests of modest size affect its standing but slightly. And the result is what might be expected. If the East sees a State like Nevada profiting from subsidies at better than the rate of two hundred per cent on its tax payment, while the best a State like New York can do is a return of less than one per cent, then the East is likely to conclude that the whole subsidy process is an abomination. We have here not the whole explanation why the East is anti-subsidy, anti-centralization, anti-government in business—why it likes the Mellon plan and wishes Washington would crawl back modestly into a smaller shell—but we have one cogent factor.

Meantime, and with the logic of the same equation, we have a new discovery in the South. The discovery is that Washington is a good place to come for State assistance. The East may find subsidies unprofitable; the South does better. Each of these subsidy measures is a repudiation of time-honored Southern doctrine that the States can and should finance their own affairs; each, because it is paid solely upon condition that the States surrender a little more authority to Washington, is a direct invasion of States' Rights. But these considerations do not check the enthusiasm of Southern Congressmen. The Treasury is the Treasury, rich in its promise of State aid; and there is not a single State-invading subsidy of the last ten years which Southern leadership and Southern votes have failed to help through Congress. The authors of three of the first four subsidies were Southern men.

Finally, there is the West, with that agrarian radicalism which demands farm loans, farm boards, farm blocs, and a general extension of the authority of the federal government to deal with local problems of the wheat belt. It is surely no accident that the La Follette movement is strong where subsidies are strong, and weak where subsidies are weak. Mr. La Follette's best territory in the last election was in the West and on the Pacific Coast; those two sections are first and second (except for the South, which can be ignored in this reckoning because at present it is immovably Democratic) on the list of sections showing profitable returns from subsidies. Mr. La Follette's next best section was the Middle West; that is, the next best section on the list of subsidies. Mr. La Follette's worst showing was in New England and the East; that is where subsidies are regarded with small favor.

By themselves, of course, subsidies are no more the whole explanation of the La Follette movement in the West than they are the whole explanation of the Mellon movement in the East or the movement toward federalism in the South. But they are an integral part of all three movements, and the first point of attack.

There is a factor here which is developing a new set of alternatives within the two-party system of American politics, and a factor of more substance with each year that passes.

For we are not in the last lap of subsidies. We are in the *first* lap of subsi-

dies. And we are in the first lap because the sections of the country which profit most from the business of subsidies have just begun to realize the opportunities inherent in bloc action. Within recent months Congress has enacted still another subsidy measure in addition to those listed here—the Clarke-McNary Act, appropriating $2,800,000 annually to subsidize state forestation work. Another subsidy measure was debated in committee—the Sterling Bill, appropriating $100,000,000 with which to subsidize state education. A score of other subsidy bills were submitted to Congress in its last session. And it is a reasonably safe guess that there will be more of them at the next session. The subsidy issue will be argued with more and more insistence by its friends among the blocs.

And as it is argued it will raise, more or less inevitably, new questions of taxation and division of receipts, new questions of federal authority, of centralization as a method versus decentralization as a safe way out. Obviously those questions are the sort which touch the first-hand interests of the voter—how is he to vote? Our parties, as they are organized to-day, do not divide upon this issue. For the same Republican party which contains the farm bloc of Senator Capper—a bloc ardently in favor of more subsidies—contains also the business bloc of Mr. Mellon and Senator Butler, as ardently against them. The same Democratic party which contains a pro-subsidy contingent from the agricultural South contains an anti-subsidy contingent from the industrial East. And the La Follette movement, which has managed to consolidate a good deal of subsidy enthusiasm in the West, does not penetrate the South at all—and will not, in the present order of affairs.

Whether the result will be to bring about a new party realignment in this country, with parties which do not try so endlessly to face both ways at once, is a point which lends itself to speculation; but such speculation should not obscure the fact that, in a very real sense of the word and upon a very wide range of questions, that realignment is already here.

What else does it mean when West and South vote so compactly against New England and the East? What else does it mean when members of Congress so easily ignore their party tags, so readily cross the party aisle in both directions, so willingly forget their Republicanism or their Democracy, to vote as big-tax men or little-tax men, big-subsidy men or little-subsidy men, big city men or little city men, friends or foes of State aid in schools and roads and reclamation?

In the West we have agrarian radicalism, demanding that Washington assume new responsibilities and new powers. In the East we have rebellion against taxes, coupled with insistence that the government retrench. In the South we have States' Rights left—a mere shadow of the States' Rights of fifty years ago—with a hundred busy legislators writing bills which strip the States of power. One factor which threads these tendencies and helps explain their motive is the subsidy. There is a new issue taking on importance in our politics, and on both sides it calls for volunteers.

THE SONG OF THE FLYING FISH

A Father Brown Detective Story

BY G. K. CHESTERTON

THE soul of Mr. Peregrine Smart hovered like a fly round one possession and one joke. It might be considered a mild joke, for it consisted merely of asking people if they had seen his goldfish. It might also be considered an expensive joke; but it is doubtful whether he was not secretly more attached to the joke than to the evidence of expenditure. In talking to his neighbors, in the little group of new houses that had grown up round the old village green, he lost no time in turning the conversation in the direction of his hobby. To Dr. Burdock, a rising biologist with a resolute chin and hair brushed back like a German's, Mr. Smart made the easy transition "You are interested in natural history; have you seen my goldfish?" To so orthodox an evolutionist as Dr. Burdock doubtless all nature was one; but at first sight the link was not close, as he was a specialist who had concentrated entirely upon the primitive ancestry of the giraffe. To Father Brown, from a church in the neighboring provincial town, he traced a rapid train of thought which touched on the topics of "Rome—St. Peter—fishermen—fish—goldfish." In talking to Mr. Imlack Smith, the Bank manager, a slim and sallow gentleman of dressy appearance but quiet demeanor, he violently wrenched the conversation to the subject of the gold standard, from which it was merely a step to goldfish. In talking to that brilliant Oriental traveler and scholar, Count Yvon de Lara (whose title was French and his face rather Russian, not to say Tartar), the versatile conversationalist showed an intense and intelligent interest in the Ganges and the Indian Ocean, leading naturally to the possible presence of goldfish in those waters. From Mr. Harry Hartopp, the very rich but very shy and silent young gentleman who had recently come down from London, he had at last extorted the information that the embarrassed youth in question was *not* interested in fishing; and had then added "Talking about fishing, have you seen my goldfish?"

The peculiar thing about the goldfish was that they were made of gold. They were part of an eccentric but expensive toy, said to have been made by the freak of some rich Eastern prince; and Mr. Smart had picked it up at some sale or in some curiosity shop such as he frequented for the purpose of lumbering up his house with unique and useless things. From the other end of the room it looked like a rather unusually large bowl containing rather unusually large living fish; a closer inspection showed it to be a huge bubble of beautifully blown Venetian glass, very thin and delicately clouded with faintly iridescent color, in the tinted twilight of which hung grotesque golden fishes with great rubies for eyes. The whole thing was undoubtedly worth a great deal in solid material; how much more would depend upon the waves of lunacy passing over the world of collectors. Mr. Smart's new secretary, a young man named Francis Boyle, though an Irishman and not credited with caution, was mildly surprised at his talking so freely of the gems of his collection to the group of comparative

strangers who happened to have alighted in a rather nomadic fashion in the neighborhood; for collectors are commonly vigilant and sometimes secretive. In the course of settling down to his new duties Mr. Boyle found he was not alone in this sentiment, and that in others it passed from a mild wonder to a grave disapproval.

"It's a wonder his throat isn't cut," said Mr. Smart's valet Harris, not without a hypothetical relish, almost as if he had said, in a purely artistic sense, "It's a pity."

"It's extraordinary how he leaves things about," said Mr. Smart's head-clerk Jameson, who had come up from the office to assist the new secretary, "and he won't even put up those ramshackle old bars across his ramshackle old door."

"It's all very well with Father Brown and the doctor," said Mr. Smart's housekeeper, Mrs. Robinson, with a certain vigorous vagueness that marked her opinions; "but when it comes to foreigners, I call it tempting Providence. It isn't only the Count either; that man at the bank looks to me much too yellow to be English."

"Well, that young Hartopp is English enough," said Boyle good-humoredly, "to the extent of not having a word to say for himself."

"He thinks the more," said the housekeeper. "He may not be exactly a foreigner, but he is not such a fool as he looks. Foreign is as foreign does, I say," she added darkly.

Her disapproval would probably have deepened if she had heard the conversation in her master's drawing-room that afternoon—a conversation of which the goldfish were the text but of which the offensive foreigner tended more and more to be the central figure. It was not that he spoke so much; but even his silences had something positive about them. He looked the more massive for sitting in a sort of heap on a heap of cushions and in the deepening twilight his wide Mongolian face seemed faintly luminous like a moon. Perhaps his background brought out something atmospherically Asiatic about his face and figure; for the room curtained in dim blue was a chaos of more or less costly curiosities, amid which could be seen the crooked curves and glowing colors of countless eastern weapons, eastern pipes and vessels, eastern musical instruments and illuminated manuscripts. Anyhow, as the conversation proceeded, Boyle felt more and more that the figure seated on the cushions and dark against the twilight had the exact outline of a huge image of Buddha.

The conversation was general enough; for all the little local group were present. They were indeed often in the habit of dropping in at one another's houses; and by this time constituted a sort of club of people coming from the four or five houses standing round the green. Of these houses Peregrine Smart's was the oldest, largest, and most picturesque; it straggled down almost the whole of one side of the square; leaving only room for a small villa inhabited by a retired colonel named Varney, who was reported to be an invalid and certainly was never seen to go abroad. At right angles to these stood two or three shops which served the simpler needs of the hamlet, and at the corner the inn of the Blue Dragon at which Mr. Hartopp, the stranger from London, was staying. On the opposite side were three houses, one rented by the Count de Lara, one by Dr. Burdock, and the third still standing empty. On the fourth side was the bank, with an adjoining house for the bank manager and a line of fence inclosing some land that was let for building. It was thus a very self-contained group and the comparative emptiness of the open ground for miles round it threw the members more and more on one another's society. That afternoon one stranger had indeed broken into the magic circle—a hatchet-faced fellow with fierce tufts of eyebrow and mustache and so shabbily dressed that he must have been a millionaire or a duke

if he had really (as was alleged) come down to do business with the old collector. But he was known at the Blue Dragon at least as Mr. Harmer.

To him had been recounted anew the glories of the gilded fish and the criticisms regarding their custody.

"People are always telling me I ought to lock them up more carefully," observed Mr. Smart, cocking an eyebrow over his shoulder at the dependent who stood there holding some papers from the office. Smart was a round-faced, round-bodied little old man rather like a bald parrot. "Jameson and Harris and the rest are always at me to bar the doors as if it were a medieval fortress; though really these rotten old rusty bars are too medieval to keep anybody out, I should think. I prefer to trust to luck and the local police."

"It is not always the best bars that keep people out," said the Count. "It all depends on who's trying to get in. There was an ancient Hindu hermit who lived naked in a cave and passed through the three armies that encircled the Mogul and took the great ruby out of the tyrant's turban and went back unscathed like a shadow. For he wished to teach the great how small are the laws of space and time."

"When we really study the small laws of space and time," said Dr. Burdock dryly, "we generally find out how those tricks are done. Western science has let in daylight on a good deal of eastern magic. Doubtless a great deal can be done with hypnotism and suggestion, to say nothing of sleight of hand."

"The ruby was not in the royal tent," observed the Count in his dreamy fashion, "but he found it among a hundred tents."

"Can't all that be explained by telepathy?" asked the Doctor sharply.

The question sounded the sharper because it was followed by a heavy silence, almost as if the distinguished Oriental traveler had, with imperfect politeness, gone to sleep.

"I beg your pardon," he said, rousing himself with a sudden smile. "I had forgotten we were talking with words. In the East we talk with thoughts; so we never misunderstand one another. It is strange how you people worship words and are satisfied with words. What difference does it make to a thing that you now call it telepathy as you once called it tomfoolery? If a man climbs into the sky on a mango tree, how is it altered by saying it is only levitation instead of saying it is only lies? If a medieval witch waved a wand and turned me into a blue baboon, you would say it was 'only' atavism."

The doctor looked for a moment as if he might say that it would not be so great a change after all. But before his irritation could find that or any other vent, the man called Harmer interrupted gruffly:

"It's true enough those Indian conjurors can do queer things; but I notice they generally do them in India. Confederates perhaps or merely mass psychology. I don't think those tricks have ever been played in an English village; and I should say our friend's goldfish were quite safe."

"I will tell you a story," said de Lara in his motionless way, "which happened not in India but outside an English barrack in the most modernized part of Cairo. A sentinel was standing inside the grating of an iron gateway, looking out between the bars on to the street. There appeared outside the gate a beggar barefoot and in native rags who asked him in English that was startlingly distinct and refined for a certain official document kept in the building for safety. The soldier told the man of course that he could not come inside; and the man answered smiling, 'What is inside and what is outside?' The soldier was still staring scornfully through the iron grating when he gradually realized that, though neither he nor the gate had moved, he was actually standing in the street and looking in at the barrack yard, where the beggar stood

"PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS TELLING ME I OUGHT TO LOCK THEM UP MORE CAREFULLY"

still smiling and equally motionless. Then when the beggar turned towards the inner building the sentry awoke to such sense as he had left and shouted a warning to all the soldiers within the gated inclosure to hold the prisoner fast. 'You won't get out of there anyhow,' he said vindictively. Then the beggar said in his silver voice, 'What is outside and what is inside?' And the soldier, still glaring through the same bars, saw that they were once more between him and the street, where the beggar stood free and smiling with a paper in his hand."

Mr. Imlack Smith, the bank manager, was looking at the carpet with his dark sleek head bowed and he spoke for the first time.

"Did anything happen about the paper?" he asked.

"Your professional instincts are correct, sir," said the Count with grim affability. "It was a paper of considerable financial importance. Its consequences were international."

"I hope they don't occur often," said young Hartopp gloomily.

"I do not touch the political side," said the Count serenely, "but only the philosophical. It illustrates how the wise man can get behind time and space and turn the levers of them, so to speak, so that the whole world turns round before our eyes. But it is so hard for you people to believe that spiritual powers are really more powerful than material ones."

"Well," said old Smart cheerfully, "I don't profess to be an authority on spiritual powers. What do you say, Father Brown?"

"The only thing that strikes me," answered the little priest, "is that all the supernatural acts we have yet heard of seem to be thefts. And stealing by spiritual methods seems to me much the same as stealing by material ones."

"Father Brown is a Philistine," said the smiling Smith.

"I have a sympathy with the tribe," said Father Brown. "A Philistine is only a man who is right without knowing why."

"All this is too clever for me," said Hartopp heartily.

"Perhaps," said Father Brown with a smile, "you would like to speak with-

out words, as the Count suggests. He would begin by saying nothing in a pointed fashion and you would retort with a burst of taciturnity."

"Something might be done with music," murmured the Count dreamily. "It would be better than all these words."

"Yes, I might understand that better," said the young man in a low voice.

Boyle had followed the conversation with curious attention, for there was something in the demeanor of more than one of the talkers that seemed to him significant or even odd. As the talk drifted to music, with an appeal to the dapper bank manager (who was an amateur musician of some merit), the young secretary awoke with a start to his secretarial duties; and reminded his employer that the head-clerk was still standing patiently with the papers in his hand.

"Oh! never mind about those just now, Jameson," said Smart rather hurriedly, "only something about my account; I'll see Mr. Smith about it later. You were saying that the 'cello, Mr. Smith—"

But the cold breath of business had sufficed to disperse the fumes of transcendental talk, and the guests began one after another to say farewell. Only Mr. Imlack Smith, bank manager and musician, remained to the last; and when the rest were gone he and his host went into the inner room where the goldfish were kept and closed the door.

The house was long and narrow, with a covered balcony running along the first floor, which consisted mostly of a sort of suite of rooms used by the householder himself, his bedroom and dressing room and an inner room in which very valuable treasures were sometimes stored for the night instead of being left in the rooms below. This balcony, like the insufficiently barred door below, was a matter of great concern to the housekeeper and the head-clerk and the others who lamented the carelessness of the collector; but in truth that cunning old gentleman was more careful than he seemed. He professed no great belief in the antiquated fastenings of the old house, which the housekeeper lamented to see rusting in idleness, but he had an eye to the more important point of strategy. He always put his favorite goldfish in the room at the back of his bedroom for the night and slept in front of it, as it were, with a revolver under his pillow. And when Boyle and Jameson, awaiting his return from the tête-à-tête, at length saw the door open and their employer reappear, he was carrying the great glass bowl as reverently as if it had been the relic of a saint.

Outside, the last edges of the sunset still clung to the corners of the gray-green landscape; but inside a lamp had already been kindled; and in the mingling of the two lights the colored globe glowed like some monstrous jewel and the fantastic outline of the fiery fishes seemed to give it indeed something of the mystery of a talisman; like strange shapes seen by a seer in the crystal of doom. Over the old man's shoulder the olive face of Imlack Smith stared like a sphinx.

"I am going up to London to-night, Mr. Boyle," said old Smart with more gravity than he commonly showed. "Mr. Smith and I are catching the six-forty-five. I should prefer you and Jameson to sleep upstairs in my rooms to-night; if you put the bowl in the back room as usual, it will be quite safe then. Not that I suppose anything could possibly happen."

"Anything may happen anywhere," said the smiling Mr. Smith. "I think you generally take a gun to bed with you. Perhaps you had better leave it behind in this case."

Peregrine Smart did not reply, and they passed out of the house on to the road round the village green.

The secretary and the head-clerk slept that night as directed in their employer's bedroom. To speak more strictly, Jameson the head-clerk slept in a bed in the

dressing-room, but the door stood open between, and the two rooms running along the front were practically one. Only the bedroom had a long French window opening on the balcony and an entrance at the back into the inner apartment where the goldfish bowl had been placed for safety. Boyle dragged his bed right across so as to bar this entrance, put the revolver under his pillow, and then undressed and went to bed, feeling that he had taken all possible precautions against an impossible or improbable event. He did not see why there should be any particular danger of normal burglary; and as for the spiritual burglary that figured in the traveler's tales of the Count de Lara, if his thoughts ran on them so near to sleep it was because they were such stuff as dreams are made of. They soon turned into dreams with intervals of dreamless slumber. As usual the old clerk was a little more restless; but after fussing about a little longer, and repeating some of his favorite regrets and warnings, he also retired to his bed in the same manner and slept. The moon brightened and grew dim again above the green square and the gray blocks of houses in a solitude and silence that seemed to have no human witness; and it was when the white cracks of daybreak had already appeared in the corners of the gray sky that the thing happened.

"I AM GOING UP TO LONDON"

Boyle, being young, was naturally both the healthier and the heavier sleeper of the two. Though active enough when he was once awake, he always had a load to lift in waking. Moreover, he had dreams of the sort that cling to the emerging mind like the dim coils of an octopus. They were a medley of many things, including his last look from the balcony across the four gray roads and the green square. But the pattern of them changed and shifted and turned dizzily, to the accompaniment of a low grinding noise, which sounded somehow like a subterranean river and may have been no more than old Mr. Jameson snoring in the dressing-room. But in the dreamer's mind all that murmur and motion was vaguely connected with the words of the Count de Lara about a wisdom that could hold the levers of time and space and turn the world. In the dream it seemed as if a vast murmuring machinery under the world were really moving whole landscapes hither and thither; so that the ends of the earth might appear in a man's front garden, or his own front garden be exiled beyond the sea.

The first complete impression he had

were the words of a song, with a rather thin metallic accompaniment; they were sung in a foreign accent and a voice that was still strange and yet faintly familiar. And yet he could hardly feel sure that he was not making up poetry in his sleep.

"Over the land and over the sea
My flying fishes will come to me
For the note is not of the world that wakes them
But in ——"

He struggled to his feet and saw that his fellow-guardian was already out of bed; Jameson was peering out of the long window on to the balcony and calling out to someone in the street below.

"Who's that?" he called out sharply. "What do you want?"

He turned to Boyle in agitation, saying "There's somebody prowling about just outside. I knew it wasn't safe. I'm going to bar that front-door whatever they say."

He ran downstairs in a flutter, and Boyle could hear the clattering of the bars upon the front-door; but Boyle himself stepped out upon the balcony and looked out on the long gray road that led up to the house, and he thought he was still dreaming.

Upon that gray road leading across that empty moor and through that little English hamlet there had appeared a figure that might have stepped straight out of the jungle or the bazaar; a figure out of one of the Count's fantastic stories; a figure out of the *Arabian Nights*. The rather ghostly gray twilight which begins to define and yet to discolor everything when the light in the east has ceased to be localized lifted slowly like a veil of gray gauze and showed him a figure wrapped in outlandish raiment. A scarf of a strange sea-blue, vast and voluminous, went round the head like a turban and then again round the chin, giving rather the general character of a hood; so far as the face was concerned it had all the effect of a mask. For the raiment round the head was drawn close as a veil; and the head itself was bowed over a queer-looking musical instrument made of silver or steel, and shaped like a deformed or crooked violin. It was played with something like a silver comb and the notes were curiously thin and keen. Before Boyle could open his mouth the same haunting alien accent came from under the shadow of the burnous, singing words of the same sort:

"As the golden birds go back to the tree
My golden fishes return to me
Return ——"

"You've no right here," called out Boyle in exasperation, hardly knowing what he said.

"I have a right to the goldfish," said the stranger, speaking more like King Solomon than an unsandaled Bedouin in a ragged blue cloak. "And they will come to me. Come!"

He struck his strange fiddle as his voice rose sharply on the word. There was a pang of sound that seemed to pierce the ear; and then there came a fainter sound like an answer, like a vibrant whisper. It came from the dark room behind where the bowl of goldfish was standing.

Boyle turned towards it; and even as he turned the echo in the inner room changed to a long tingling sound like an electric bell and that to a faint crash. He stepped swiftly into the inner chamber. The old clerk had already regained the top of the stairs, panting a little, for he was an elderly gentleman.

"I've locked up the door anyhow," he said.

"The stable door," said Boyle, out of the darkness of the inner room.

Jameson followed him into that apartment and found him staring down at the floor, which was covered with a litter of colored glass like the curved bits of a broken rainbow.

"What do you mean by the stable door?" began Jameson.

"I mean that the steed is stolen," answered Boyle. "The flying steeds. The

flying fishes our Arab friend outside has just whistled to him like so many performing puppies."

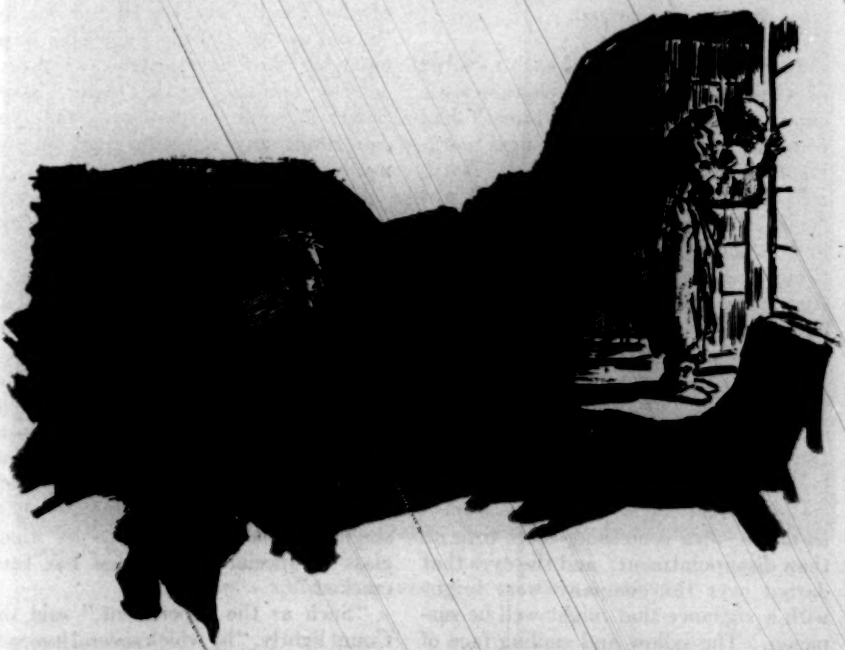
"But how could he?" exploded the old clerk, as if such events were hardly respectable.

"Well, they're gone," said Boyle shortly. "The broken bowl is here, which would have taken a long time to open properly, but only a second to smash. But the fish are gone, God knows how, though I think our friend ought to be asked."

"We are wasting time," said the distracted Jameson. "We ought to be after him at once."

"Much better be telephoning the police at once," answered Boyle. "They ought to outstrip him in a flash with motors and telephones, that go a good deal farther than we should ever get, running through the village in our nightgowns. But it may be there are things even police cars and wires won't outstrip."

While Jameson was talking to the police-station through the telephone in an agitated voice, Boyle went out again on to the balcony and hastily scanned that gray landscape of daybreak. There was no trace of the man in the turban and no other sign of life, except some faint stirrings an expert might have recognized in the hotel of the Blue Dragon. Only Boyle for the first time noted consciously something that he had all along been noting unconsciously. It was like a fact struggling in the submerged mind and demanding its own meaning. It was simply the fact that the gray landscape had never been entirely gray; there was one gold spot amid its level stripes of colorless color—a lamp lighted in one of the houses on the other side of the green. Something, perhaps irrational, told him that it had been burning through all the hours of the darkness and was only fading with the dawn. He counted the houses and his calculation brought out a result which seemed to fit in with some-



JAMESON WAS PEERING OUT OF THE LONG WINDOW

thing, he knew not what. It was apparently the house of the Count Yvon de Lara.

Inspector Pinner had arrived with several policemen and done several things of a rapid and resolute sort, being conscious that the very absurdity of the costly trinkets taken might give the case considerable prominence in the newspapers. He had examined everything, measured everything, taken down everybody's deposition, taken everybody's fingerprints, put everybody's back up, and found himself at the end left facing a fact which he could not believe. An Arab from the desert had walked up the public road and stopped in front of the house of Mr. Peregrine Smart where a bowl of artificial goldfish was kept in an inner room; he had then sung or recited a little poem and the bowl had exploded like a bomb and the fishes vanished into thin air. Nor did it soothe the Inspector to be told by a foreign count in a soft purring voice that the bounds of experience were being enlarged.

Indeed, the attitude of each member of the little group was characteristic enough. Peregrine Smart himself had come back from London the next morning to hear the news of his loss. Naturally he admitted a shock; but it was typical of something sporting and spirited in the little old gentleman—something that always made his small strutting figure look like a cock-sparrow's—that he showed more vivacity in the search than depression at the loss. The man named Harmer, who had come to the village on purpose to buy the goldfish, might be excused for being a little testy on learning they were not there to be bought. But in truth his rather aggressive mustache and eyebrows seemed to bristle with something more definite than disappointment; and the eyes that darted over the company were bright with a vigilance that might well be suspicion. The sallow and smiling face of the bank manager, who had also returned from London though by a later train, seemed again and again to attract those shining and shifting eyes like a magnet. Of the two remaining figures of the original circle, Father Brown was generally silent when he was not spoken to, and the dazed Hartopp was often silent even when he was.

But the Count was not a man to let anything pass that gave an apparent advantage to his views. He smiled at his rationalistic rival, the Doctor, in the manner of one who knows how it is possible to be irritating by being ingratiating.

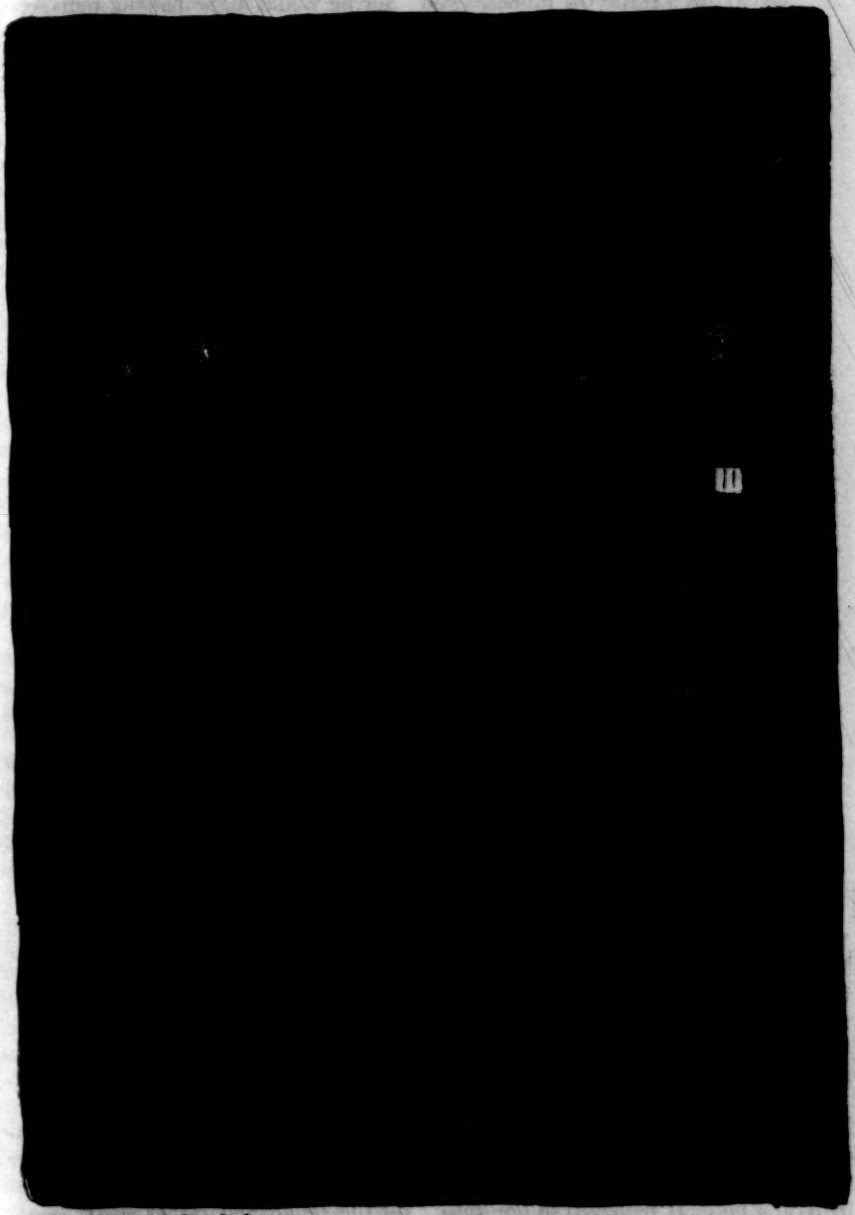
"You will admit, Doctor," he said, "that at least some of the stories you thought so improbable look a little more realistic to-day than they did yesterday. When a man as ragged as those I described is able by speaking a word to dissolve a solid vessel inside the four walls of the house outside which he stands, it might perhaps be called an example of what I said about spiritual powers and material barriers."

"And it might be called an example of what I said," said the Doctor sharply, "about a little scientific knowledge being enough to show how the tricks are done."

"Do you really mean, Doctor," asked Smart in some excitement, "that you can throw any scientific light on this mystery?"

"I can throw light on what the Count calls a mystery," said the Doctor, "because it is not a mystery at all. That part of it is plain enough. A sound is only a wave of vibration, and certain vibrations can break glass if the sound is of a certain kind and the glass of a certain kind. The man did not stand in the road and think—which the Count tells us is the ideal method when Orientals want a little chat. He sang out what he wanted quite loud and struck a shrill note on an instrument. It is similar to many experiments by which glass of special composition has been cracked."

"Such as the experiment," said the Count lightly, "by which several lumps of solid gold have suddenly ceased to exist."



Drawn by Frederic Dorr Steele

HE SAW A FIGURE WRAPPED IN OUTLANDISH RAIMENT

"Here comes Inspector Pinner," said Boyle. "Between ourselves, I think he would regard the Doctor's natural explanation as quite as much of a fairy tale as the Count's preternatural one. A very skeptical intellect, Mr. Pinner's; especially about me. I rather think I am under suspicion."

"I think we are all under suspicion," said the Count.

It was the presence of this suspicion in his own case that led Boyle to seek the personal advice of Father Brown. They were walking round the village green together some hours later in the day when the priest, who was frowning thoughtfully at the ground as he listened, suddenly stopped.

"Do you see that?" he asked. "Something odd about the pavements here—just this little strip of pavement outside this small house."

Father Brown looked up rather earnestly at the house, which was high and narrow and carried rows of striped sunblinds of gay but already faded colors. The chinks or crannies that gave glimpses of the interior looked all the darker; indeed, they looked almost black in contrast with the façade thus golden in the morning light.

"That is Colonel Varney's house, isn't it?" he asked. "He comes from the East too, I fancy. What sort of a man is he?"

"I've never even seen him," answered Boyle. "I don't think anybody's seen him except Dr. Burdock; and I rather fancy the Doctor doesn't see him more than he need."

"Well, I'm going to see him for a minute," said Father Brown.

The big front-door opened and swallowed the small priest; his friend had an instantaneous glimpse of the copper face of an Indian servant and a large palm in a pot. It reopened in ten minutes and Father Brown emerged, still smiling, and continued his slow and pottering progress round the square of roads. Sometimes he seemed to have forgotten the matter in hand altogether; for he would make passing remarks on historical and social questions or on the prospects of development in the district. He remarked on the red soil used for the beginning of a new road by the bank; he looked across the old village green with a vague expression, saying, "Common Land, I suppose. People ought to feed their pigs and geese on it, if they had any pigs or geese; as it is, it seems to feed nothing but nettles and thistles. What a pity, that what was supposed to be a sort of large meadow has been turned into a small and petty wilderness! That's Dr. Burdock's house opposite, isn't it?"

"Yes," answered Boyle, almost jumping at this abrupt postscript.

"Very well," answered Father Brown, "then I think we'll go indoors again."

As they opened the front-door of Smart's house and mounted the stairs, Boyle repeated to his companion many details of the drama enacted there at daybreak.

"I suppose you didn't doze off again?" asked Father Brown, "giving time for somebody to scale the balcony while Jameson ran down to secure the door?"

"No," answered Boyle, "I am sure of that. I woke up to hear Jameson challenging the stranger from the balcony; then I heard him running downstairs and putting up the bars; and then in three strides I was on the balcony myself."

"Or could he have slipped in between you from another corner? Are there any other entrances besides the front entrance?"

"Apparently not," said Boyle gravely.

"I had better make sure, don't you think?" asked Father Brown apologetically, and scuttled softly downstairs again. Boyle remained in the front bedroom, gazing rather doubtfully after him. After a comparatively brief interval the round and rather rustic visage appeared again at the head of the stairs, looking rather like a turnip ghost with a broad grin.

"No, I think that settled the matter of entrances," said the turnip ghost

cheerfully. "And now I think, having got everything in a tight box, so to speak, we can take stock of what we've got. It's rather a curious business."

"Do you think," asked Boyle, "that the Count or the Colonel or any of those eastern travelers have anything to do with it? Do you think it is—preternatural?"

"I will grant you this," said the priest gravely: "If the Count or the Colonel or any of your neighbors did dress up in Arab masquerade and creep up to this house in the dark—then it *was* preternatural."

"What do you mean? Why?"

"Because the Arab left no footprints," answered Father Brown. "The Colonel on the one side and the banker on the other are the nearest of your neighbors. That loose red soil is between you and the bank: it would print off bare feet like a plaster cast and probably leave red marks everywhere. I braved the Colonel's curry-seasoned temper to verify the fact that the front pavement was washed yesterday and not to-day; it was wet enough to make wet footprints all along the road. Now if the visitor were the Count or the Doctor in the houses opposite, he might possibly, of course, have come across the common. But he must have found it exceedingly uncomfortable with bare feet; for it is, as I remarked, one mass of thorns and thistles. He would surely have pricked himself and probably left traces of it. Unless, as you say, he was a preternatural being."

A ROUND VISAGE APPEARED

Boyle looked steadily at the grave and indecipherable face of his clerical friend.

"Do you mean that he was?" he asked at length.

"There is one general truth to remember," said Father Brown after a pause. "A thing can sometimes be too close to be seen, as, for instance, a man cannot see himself. There was a man who had a fly in his eye when he looked through the telescope, and he discovered that there was a most incredible dragon in the moon. And I am told that if a man hears the exact reproduction of his own voice, it sounds like the voice of a stranger. In the same way, anything that is right in the foreground of our life we hardly see; and if we did we might think it quite odd. If the thing in the foreground got into the middle distance, we should probably think it had come from the remote distance. Just come outside the house again for a moment; I want to show you how it looks from another standpoint."

He had already risen, and as they descended the stairs he continued his remarks, in a rather groping fashion as if he were thinking aloud.

"The Count and the Asiatic atmosphere all come in, because in a case like this everything depends on the prepa-

ration of the mind. A man can reach a condition in which a brick falling on his head will seem to be a Babylonian brick, carved with cuneiform, and dropped from the Hanging Gardens of Babylon; so that he will never even look at the brick and see it is of one pattern with the bricks of his own house. So in your case—"

"What does this mean?" interrupted Boyle, staring and pointing at the entrance. "What in the name of wonder does it mean? The door is barred again."

He was staring at the front-door by which they had entered but a little while before; and across which stood once more the great dark bands of rusty iron which had once, as he had said, locked the stable door too late. There was something darkly and dumbly ironic in that old fastening closing behind them and imprisoning them, as if of its own motion.

"Oh, those," said Father Brown casually. "I put up those bars myself just now. Didn't you hear me?"

"No," answered Boyle, staring. "I heard nothing."

"Well, I rather thought you wouldn't," said the other equably. "There's really no reason why anybody upstairs should hear those bars being put up. A sort of hook fits easily into a sort of hole. When you're quite close you hear a dull click; but that's all. The only thing that makes any noise a man could hear upstairs is this."

And he lifted the bar out of its socket and let it fall with a clang at the side of the door.

"It does make a noise if you *unbar* the door," said Father Brown gravely, "even if you do it pretty carefully."

"You mean—"

"I mean," said Father Brown, "that what you heard upstairs was Jameson opening the door and not shutting it. And now let's open the door ourselves and go outside."

When they stood outside in the street, under the balcony, the little priest resumed his previous explanation as coolly as if it had been a chemical lecture.

"I was saying that a man may be in the mood to look for something very distant and not realize that it is something very close—something very close to himself—perhaps something very like himself. It was a strange and outlandish thing that you saw when you looked down at this road. I suppose it never occurred to you to consider what *he* saw when he looked up at that balcony."

Boyle was staring at the balcony and did not answer, and the other added:

"You thought it very wild and wonderful that an Arab should come through civilized England with bare feet. You did not remember that at the same moment you had bare feet yourself."

Boyle at last found words and they were to repeat words already spoken.

"Jameson opened the door?" he said mechanically.

"Yes," assented his friend. "Jameson opened the door and came out into the road in his night clothes, just as you came out on to the balcony. He caught up two things that you had seen a hundred times—the length of old blue curtain that he wrapped round his head and the Oriental musical instrument you must have often seen in that heap of Oriental curiosities. The rest was atmosphere and acting—very fine acting; for he is a very fine artist in crime."

"Jameson!" exclaimed Boyle incredulously. "He was such a dull old stick that I never even noticed him."

"Precisely," said the priest. "He was an artist. If he could act a wizard or a troubadour for six minutes, do you think he could not act a clerk for six weeks?"

"I am still not quite sure of his object," said Boyle.

"His object has been achieved," replied Brown, "or very nearly achieved. He had taken the goldfish already, of course, as he had twenty chances of doing. But if he had simply taken them everybody would have realized that he had twenty chances of doing it. By cre-

ating a mysterious magician from the ends of the earth, he set everybody's thoughts wandering far afield to Arabia and India, so that you yourself can hardly believe that the whole thing was so near home. It was too close to you to be seen."

"If this is true," said Boyle, "it was an extraordinary risk to run and he had to cut it very fine. It's true I never heard the man in the street say anything while Jameson was talking from the balcony; so I suppose that was all a fake. And I suppose it's true that there was time for him to get outside before I had fully woken up and got out on to the balcony. But suppose I had woken up too soon."

"Every crime depends on somebody not waking up too soon," replied Father Brown, "and in every sense most of us wake up too late. I for one have woken up much too late. For I imagine he's bolted long ago; just before or just after they took his fingerprints."

"You woke up before anybody else anyhow," said Boyle, "and I should never have woken up in that sense. Jameson was so correct and colorless that I forgot all about him."

"Beware of the man you forget," replied his friend: "he is the one man who has you entirely at a disadvantage. But I did not suspect him either until you told me how you heard him barring the door."

"Anyhow, we owe it all to you," said Boyle warmly.

"You owe it all to Mrs. Robinson," said Father Brown with a smile.

"Mrs. Robinson?" questioned the wondering secretary, "you don't mean the housekeeper?"

"Beware of the woman you forget, and even more," answered the other. "This man was a very high-class criminal; he had been an excellent actor, and therefore he was a good psychologist. A man like the Count never hears any voice but his own; but this man could listen when you had all forgotten he was there, and gather exactly the right materials for his romance and know exactly the right note to strike to lead you all astray. But he made one bad mistake in psychology. And that was about the psychology of Mrs. Robinson."

"I don't understand," answered Boyle, "what she can have to do with it?"

"Jameson did not expect the doors to be barred," said Father Brown. "He knew that a lot of men, especially careless men like you and your employer, could go on saying for days that something might as well be done; but if you convey to a woman that something ought to be done there is always a dreadful danger that she will suddenly do it."

A NEW WAY WITH OLD MASTERPIECES

V—*Charles Dickens*

BY ERNEST BOYD

THE reputation of Charles Dickens differs in one vital respect from that of the other classical writers whom we have considered: his fame is essentially popular. He is not an author whom the critics of his time had to defend against an indifferent public opinion, and his after-fame is not swathed in the mummy wrappings of academic annotators. The consequence is that, although the literature which has accumulated about him is voluminous, it lacks the unconscious humor of the customary classical exegetists, who have had no opportunity for the display of their peculiar talents. They have placed him on no pedestal like that of Shakespeare; they have not embalmed him like Milton; unlike Swift, he has not frightened them into misrepresentation; unlike Byron, he provides no horrified thrills which induce a determination to hush things up. His name is in all the college manuals and is familiar wherever books are read, but it owes nothing of its survival to professors, who, it is interesting to note, are but scantily represented in the bibliography of his commentators. Dickens is the first great author whom the plain people discovered for themselves.

When Charles Dickens was born, in 1812, the last flickering lights of the eighteenth century were disappearing, the nineteenth century in all its fatuity had rapidly set in, and by the time he had got over his literary nonage in *Sketches by Boz*, Queen Victoria was on the throne, and it already seemed as if what we know as Victorianism was an eternal and immutable condition. The superstition of progress and the dogma of democratic infallibility were enthroned, and an era had opened up which needed prophets of a character appropriate to its peculiar needs. Literature had ceased, or was ceasing, to be the possession of a civilized minority, and after various hesitations fiction emerged as the dominant literary *genre*, the form most suited to the mass consumption which became the result of the spread of "education." Most of the novelists who shared with Dickens the enthusiasm of this new public, Harrison Ainsworth, G. P. R. James, Theodore Hook, and Wilkie Collins, were so bad that by comparison Dickens seems more than great enough to explain his survival. If the others are now forgotten, we must not forget that to the taste which Dickens fostered they were as acceptable as he, for discrimination is no part of the demand out of which his fame grew.

With the possible exception of Walter Scott, whom "no adult can read and every grown-up person has read," as Georg Brandes remarks, Charles Dickens represents the beginning of that species of literary mobocracy under which the man in the street has become increasingly the arbiter in matters which he does not understand. To this day only the most modest claims are made for Dickens as an artist and a craftsman, but his position in the affections of the crowd has always been such that criticism has been obliged to accept him and to silence its æsthetic conscience as best it can. This abdication finds its sequel to-day in the endeavor to explain "the

significance" of Mr. Sinclair Lewis, and in the general conviction that one person is just as qualified as another to speak as a critic of art and literature. Its apotheosis is found in the attitude defined by Tolstoy in *What is Art?*, where that logician of primitive Christianity carries his concern for the masses to the point at which almost every great achievement in the arts is dismissed as unworthy. An entirely new definition of art is his logical solution of the problem at which so many like to tinker—the problem of how to make art subserve a moralistic end and also remain within the reach of uneducated and undeveloped minds. Better, it seems, that infantilism be the lot of the artist than that the limitations of the mob be exposed by confrontation with matters above its level. Under a Christian democracy Tolstoy's book should be the official primer of æsthetics, for it is the only complete exposition of the ideas with which less honest minds eternally strive to compromise.

It is highly significant that Charles Dickens is one of the few writers of accepted renown who is frequently cited with approval by Tolstoy. He is the predestined glory of the evangelical literary world and the perfect model of the bourgeois Anglo-Saxon genius. He is genial, vulgar, boisterous, sentimental, and full of good intentions. He never looks a problem straight in the face if he can help it, and his flight from reality is so instinctive that he can visualize the worst social conditions, the most repulsive human types, the most tragic circumstances only in terms of the grotesque or the melodramatic. We are constantly reminded of the immortal types which Dickens has given to the whole English-speaking world: Bill Sikes is the burglar incarnate, Mrs. Gamp the nurse, Bumble the beadle, and Squeers the schoolmaster. To mention such personages as Sam Weller, the Artful Dodger, Mr. Micawber, Uriah Heep, Mr. Podsnap, Pecksniff, Mark Tapley, and a host of others, is to conjure up at once as definite a character as a person one knows in actual life. Yet the slightest reflection will show that these creations are as unreal as the heroes and heroines of the Pollyanna school of fiction. Bill Sikes and Nancy are a criminal and his girl, a pair from which those who most delight in Dickens would be the first to shrink had anything of the reality been allowed into Dickens's picture of them. Mr. Micawber is the kind of man whom his friends soon learn to avoid and whose selfish imbecility usually destroys the happiness of those who unfortunately depend upon him.

Not only does Dickens conceal all that these people really are, but his perverse sense of humor leads him to show a marked preference for getting his fun out of what is manifestly horrible or depressing to anyone with a sensitive but realistic imagination. When one begins to recall the scenes and characters which have remained as examples of Dickens's humorous fancies, one finds that an enormous number of them is intrinsically quite the opposite of funny. Dotheboys Hall and Mr. Squeers are assuredly far from laughable; Quilp is a disgusting brute; Mrs. Nickleby a dreadful infliction upon her daughter; the Reverend Mr. Stiggins a repulsive, snivelling creature; the Marchioness a painfully overworked drudge. Yet, so incurable was Dickens's sentimentalism that he could present all this sordidness, brutality, poverty, and crime without ever making their reality felt, while congratulating himself on his "realism." "I will not abate one hole in the Dodger's coat, or one scrap of curl-paper in the girl's dishevelled hair," he writes, and one is reminded of the tears and patches on a stage costume representing poverty.

In what seems to me a strenuous effort to lend some significance to the fact that Dickens survives, while his friend and collaborator Wilkie Collins is dead, like most of his contemporaries, it is said that he was a great instrument of reform, a champion of the poor, an incarnation of the sturdy virtues of Merrie

England. If the description of Dotheboys Hall reformed the English school system, then Early Victorian England was more susceptible to gentle reproof than the history of the period indicates. The Chartist movement, the Land war in Ireland, the factory legislation of Lord Shaftesbury, and so forth, are not precisely evidence that social changes were so easily effected as this theory of Dickens as the scourge of evil would imply. Neither his Bumble nor his Micawber gives any more sense of the cruelty of the Poor Law and of imprisonment for debt than his Nancy conveys the impression of being an authentic specimen of her class. His world is one of such grotesque unreality that it would be as plausible to argue that Marie Corelli's *Wormwood* aroused France and Switzerland to prohibit absinthe, as to see in *Nicholas Nickleby* or *Oliver Twist* historic documents in the history of social reform in England.

That Dickens himself had some illusion as to the reformist mission of his writings is undeniable, but his intentions need not be accepted for achievements. When the late Miss Marie Corelli wrote such masterpieces as *The Sorrows of Satan* and *Temporal Power* she had as assuredly a serious aim as had her distinguished competitor when he wrote *The Christian*. But in their unreal worlds of melodrama it is impossible to take seriously the situations described, even though one be as horrified as Miss Corelli herself was when she showed us a depraved young English girl reading Swinburne and smoking a cigarette. Propagandist fiction is bad enough in all conscience, but were it added to the other defects in Dickens he would not be read as he is to this day. Fortunately for him, his propaganda was so divorced from reality that none of his readers ever slept a wink the less on that account, just as the equal esteem in which Marie Corelli was held by the plain people was in no wise determined by their indignation at the turpitude which she professed to uncover.

The aim of Dickens was primarily to amuse, and in this respect he was so obliging that he would alter a story to make it more pleasant. When his Jewish customers protested against Fagin he provided Aaron in *Our Mutual Friend* just to show that there were noble Jews as well as the other kind. His ambition was not to express himself, except in terms of what he held in common with the average reader, but to express the point of view of his public at any cost. In other words, Dickens had all the requisites for the manufacture of digestive fiction, and he is the legitimate ancestor of the innumerable brood that has followed him in that lucrative business. The notion that popular circulationists write with tongue in cheek is erroneous. They always conceive of themselves as having a lofty purpose and, like Dickens, they imagine that they can deal with problems, with the harsher aspects of life, without bringing blushes to suppositious cheeks, and without really getting below the surface. What seems to less commonplace minds a lack of artistic integrity becomes in them that most precious of all illusions, a moral purpose. They claim to be far more effective than their less fortunately constituted colleagues in that the very sweetness and delicacy of their method enables them to build up a huge following and to reach thousands who would not respond to the unpleasant truth.

Dickens was born into English literature just at the moment when the ideals of Victorianism demanded a writer who could triumphantly realize them without doing violence to his own ideals. Whereas a Thackeray had at least the grace to admit that it had become impossible for an English novelist to emulate the author of *Tom Jones*, Dickens professed to have been greatly inspired and influenced by Fielding and Smollett, but made no complaint against the conventions which were emasculating the English novel. He was in his element in a society whose ears were stopped with cotton wool, and where taboos so

virulently flourished that the expression "Early Victorianism" was to become the synonym for unhealthy prudery and self-complacent ugliness based on what we now know to have been sheer intellectual dishonesty. The result is that the modern reader can respect only those isolated figures who miraculously escaped the prevailing blight and are rewarded in our esteem for the actual or comparative neglect which was their fate at the hands of the Victorian public. If Charlotte Brontë, or Jane Austen before her, had reflected the popular taste as Dickens did, one might have more respect both for the English novel and for the voice of the people as the voice of literary criticism.

The newly arising middle-class, with the carrot of progress dangling before its nose and the dawn of the industrial era filling the skies with clouds of smoke, very naturally demanded the literature to which it could respond, and the supply was forthcoming. There was the dreary tribe of women novelists of both sexes, the George Eliots, Gaskells, Trollopes, and worse, with Dickens leading them on. Under his reign, as much as under Victoria's, English fiction allowed its feet to be bound in bonds so tight and deforming that the cramped and almost atrophied muscles are only now beginning slowly to recover their old suppleness. The undoubtedly great talent of Dickens did not suffer under the constraints which hampered and delayed greater men who followed him immediately, like Thomas Hardy, George Meredith, and Samuel Butler. He easily accepted the postulates which governed the writing of fiction during the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century in England, postulates which make one marvel all the more because of the wonderful beginnings to which they promised an ignominious end. After Defoe, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne, these purveyors to the legendary "Young Person" were a feeble succession in a line so mighty that the Continent had learned the craft of fiction from the British novelists. Now came the novel made chemically pure by resolute evasion and timid euphemism, romanticizing the home, sentimentalizing distress, substituting marriage for love, and in its endeavor to eliminate sex almost obliterating what was known at the time as the Sex. To enumerate the omissions and defects of the Victorian novel is to sum up the entire stock in trade of Dickens: his inability to describe women who are not either morons or comic stage characters, his avoidance of passion until its wicked fruits can be dragged in for melodramatic effect, as in the affair of Steerforth and Little Em'ly and the story of Lady Dedlock in *Bleak House*, his young girls who are just pale puppets to be used for the introduction of marriage bells and, in general, his tiresome insistence on foibles and eccentricities in lieu of characterization, his substitution of masks for faces.

It is not for nothing that the era of Dickens saw the decline of the English novel from a first-rate achievement for adult minds to a distraction for children and an aid to digestion. The genius for fiction, frustrated in England, found expression in France where the preoccupations of the literary world were far removed indeed from debates as to whether *Oliver Twist* was not an immoral glorification of crime. Balzac had produced a large part of his colossal work, and *Eugénie Grandet*, *Père Goriot* and *Les Illusions perdues* made an appearance which coincided with that of *Sketches by Boz*, *Pickwick Papers*, *Oliver Twist*, and *Nicholas Nickleby*. When England was wallowing in the bathos of Little Nell, Stendhal published *La Chartreuse de Parme*. Between 1833 and 1853, the years when Dickens's fame and popularity reached their highest point, Balzac was pouring out of his wonderful fecundity the finest volumes of his Human Comedy; and he was then a man with a vast quantity of work behind him, sufficient in quantity to have at least begun to exhaust the imaginative vigor of a lesser writer. In the prodigious canon of

his writings—which the bibliographers list in more than three hundred titles—there is much rubbish; even in the more modest compass in which his collected works are preserved, many volumes could be spared. All that is conceded as to Balzac's lack of style makes his case somewhat analogous to that of Dickens, whose defects are frankly admitted by most critics. Yet there can be no comparison of these two novelists who dominated the fiction of their countries in the early nineteenth century. Balzac was a great creative genius who made the modern French novel. Dickens was an energetic entertainer whose success helped materially to unmake the modern English novel.

During the twenty-year period mentioned Dickens published *Sketches by Boz*, *The Pickwick Papers*, *Oliver Twist*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, *Dombey and Son*, *David Copperfield*, and *Bleak House*, which are not only the books of his own heyday but also those upon which his posthumous popularity chiefly rests; they are the quintessence of all that is Dickensian. They all belong to that first half of the nineteenth century whose ingenuous self-satisfaction with the shibboleths bequeathed by the then deceased and therefore respected French Revolution is so well reflected in Macaulay's *History of England*. Smug piety and domesticity enjoyed the highest sanction and example of the Court, and the country had the popular literature it deserved. But the turn of the century was to witness the first uneasy stirrings of a conviction that all was not well, and by 1859, when Darwin published *The Origin of Species*, the political and theological illusions necessary to the existence of Victorianism were being rudely shaken. Even Dickens was touched to some extent by the movement of ideas, and during the last fifteen years of his life his writings showed traces of a less unscrupulous optimism. In 1854 *Hard Times* appeared, followed by *Little Dorrit*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Great Expectations*, *Our Mutual Friend* and the unfinished *Edwin Drood*. These are the works which are credited with a real seriousness, and in them, if anywhere, the claim of Dickens to be regarded as more than a puppet master must be found.

"One or two passages of exquisite pathos and the rest sullen Socialism" was an eminently Victorian contemporary's judgment on *Hard Times*. In reality, the book is the nearest approach Dickens made to realism, in the sense that he places his scenes not in some phantasmagoric world of his imagination but in the Potteries, and his characters are recognizable types rather than caricatures. Coketown is presented, not as a slum with picturesque possibilities, but as an ordinary factory town such as Arnold Bennett might describe. Its smoke and dirt, its miserable population, its masters Gradgrind and Bounderby are no longer subjects for humorous embroidery. Dickens is content to describe them as they are and to use them to point the moral of his great discovery: that the industrial revolution meant not progress but the degradation of civilization. Mrs. Gamp and Quilp and Bill Sikes are not precisely charming people, but in their presentation by Dickens many people profess to be charmed by them. Nobody has found Gradgrind and Bounderby charming, although through sheer force of habit Dickens tries half-heartedly to make comic figures of them by his usual device of emphasizing oddities of speech and demeanor. Having described Bounderby drumming on his hat as if it were a tambourine, Dickens proceeds to add, "Mr. Bounderby put his tambourine on his head, like an oriental dancer." He provides Sleary with a stage lisp worthy of a burlesque show and, having created a relatively credible young woman in Louisa Gradgrind, he puts her through melodramatic paces comparable to those of Edith Dombey. If there is anything worse in Dickens than the scene in which Louisa tells her father that she nearly succumbed to Harthouse, either

in its stilted language or its general unconvincingness, I have not discovered it.

In *Hard Times* Dickens has largely resisted that perverse desire of his to make all loathsome creatures funny, but he still clings to the corollary of that method: he makes tragic figures theatrical and flies ignominiously from all manifestations of the elementary human passions. He either cannot—as I think—or will not create character and analyze human motives and impulses. We must be grateful when, as in *Hard Times*, he succeeds in showing us types undistorted by his resolve to be whimsical under all circumstances. Ordinarily types are abstractions which we do not accept for living human beings in the works of greater novelists. But Dickens felt so strongly the theme of *Hard Times* that he—perhaps unwittingly—planted certain types squarely before us. Better than the hackneyed passage about Gradgrind the man of facts, is this sketch of the self-made ignoramus:

> Vagabond, errand-boy, vagabond, labourer, porter, clerk, chief manager, small partner, Josiah Bounderby of Coketown. Those are the antecedents, and the culmination. Josiah Bounderby of Coketown learnt his letters from the outsides of the shops, Mrs. Gradgrind, and was first able to tell the time upon a dial-plate, from studying the steeple clock of St. Giles's Church, London, under the direction of a drunken cripple, who was a convicted thief and an incorrigible vagrant. Tell Josiah Bounderby of Coketown, of your district schools and your model schools, and your training schools, and your whole kettle-of-fish of schools; and Josiah Bounderby of Coketown tells you plainly, all right, all correct—he hadn't such advantages—but let us have hard-headed, solid-fisted people—the education that made him won't do for everybody, he knows well—such and such his education was, however, and you may force him to swallow boiling fat, but you shall never force him to suppress the facts of his life.

Unlike some of the other horrors which Dickens described, this one, so far as I know, is not counted among those with whose abolition he is credited. Even the formula for describing this Early Victorian Babbitt is still working well. Another phenomenon of modern times is also well recorded in this epic of industrial progress:

> There was a native organization in Coketown itself, whose members were to be heard of in the House of Commons every session, indignantly petitioning for acts of parliament that should make these people religious by main force. Then came the Teetotal Society, who complained that these same people *would* get drunk, and showed in tabular statements that they did get drunk, and proved at tea parties that no inducement, human or Divine (except a medal), would induce them to forego their custom of getting drunk. Then came the chemist and the druggist, with other tabular statements, showing that when they didn't get drunk, they took opium. Then came the experienced chaplain of the jail, with more tabular statements, outdoing all the previous tabular statements, and showing that the same people *would* resort to low haunts, hidden from the public eye, where they heard low singing and saw low dancing, and mayhap joined in it; and where A. B., aged twenty-four next birthday, and committed for eighteen months' solitary, had himself said (not that he had ever shown himself particularly worthy of belief) his ruin began, as he was perfectly sure and confident that otherwise he would have been a tip-top moral specimen.

Here, too, is an abuse which Dickens somehow failed to abolish, no doubt because, as these two quotations indicate, *Hard Times* lacks that genial note which turned Nancy into a sweet young thing and made Quilp just a quaint little creature. It is the harshest of all his works and one of the least popular. It is, to quote Bernard Shaw, "the first fruit of that very interesting occurrence which our religious sects call, sometimes conversion, sometimes attaining to conviction of sin . . . the occasional indignation has spread and deepened into a passionate revolt against the whole industrial order of the modern world. Here you will find no more villains and heroes, but only oppressors and victims, oppressing and suffering in spite of themselves, driven by a huge machinery

which grinds to pieces the people it should nourish and ennoble, and having for its directors the basest and the most foolish instead of the noblest and most farsighted."

Mr. Shaw is, of course, trying to persuade himself that, having touched earth for once, Dickens is to be hailed at this point as a Socialist, probably the only occasion when Bernard Shaw and Lord Macaulay ever found themselves in agreement. "Entirely right in main drift and purpose" was Ruskin's comment, which leaves the novel as such uncriticized. Looking at the book today, one is more impressed by its crudities than by its virtues when compared with the works of the earlier manner. Mr. Sleary, Cissy Jupe, Rachel and Stephen Blackpool are honest, noble, God-fearing, unselfish workers contrasted mechanically with the hardness and swinishness of the Gradgrinds and Bounderbys. Slackbridge, the trade-union organizer, is a middle-class bogey, as incredible, as unrelated to the truth as Dickens's equally bourgeois misconceptions about the aristocracy. He sees the trade unions with the same eyes as Gradgrind, and describes the meetings of Slackbridge with all the ignorance of a man who hated to remember that he once worked in a blacking factory. If Dickens had possessed that insight into the minds and hearts of the working classes with which his radical as well as his sentimental admirers endow him, it is strange that this "apostle of the people," as Edwin Pugh calls him, could be guilty of the middle-class snobbery of *Hard Times*. The truth is that this book simply stands outside the previous limits which Dickens had set himself; it does not stand higher, because at best it has the qualities of Charles Kingsley: it is mid-Victorian radicalism.

Little Dorrit, his next book, is another attempt on the part of Dickens to write seriously. The difference between it and his previous work is more obviously illustrated by the fact that it treats realistically a theme which the author had already treated fantastically. Edward Dorrit's disintegration under pressure of financial circumstance is the true story with which Dickens trifled when he drew his picture of Mr. Micawber. It is, I think, significant and typical of the problem with which Dickens confronts the modern reader that Edward Dorrit is probably the obscurest character in the Dickens repertory whereas Micawber is one of the most familiar. Dorrit is one of the rare instances of honest analysis in the writings of Dickens, Micawber is one of the many instances of sentimental embellishment; the former is forgotten, the latter is remembered. What is even more significant of the attitude of those who admire Dickens is the bewildered speculation as to how the same person, to wit, the novelist's father, could serve as the model for both Micawber and Dorrit—a bewilderment as naïve as that which might be produced by comparing the antics of a drunken man as seen by a boon companion with those antics as reported by the policeman who arrested them. The moment that Dickens describes anything as it exists in reality, we are warned that he is not himself. By one of those sardonic strokes of fate which were peculiarly numerous, as we have subsequently discovered, in the unspacious times of Queen Victoria, the life of Dickens refused to become a part of his scheme of things. The coryphant of domesticity could not live with his own wife. The anxieties of that crisis are urged in extenuation of the fact that it was then that he wrote *Little Dorrit*, a story with an unhappy ending.

We are entitled to congratulate ourselves that he did not live in this so enlightened and uninhibited age, when he would assuredly have found it both necessary and desirable to transform his domestic affairs into copy. Let us be content to note that when the bottom dropped out of Dickens's universe he also dropped his rose-colored spectacles and attempted to see life steadily, if not whole. The consequence was that in *Little Dorrit* he has left some satire which

it is still possible to read with enjoyment, the picture of the Circumlocution Office, for example, in which the eternal beauties of bureaucracy are enshrined. The essence of parliamentary government is contained in such passages as this:

> Then would the noble lord or right honourable gentleman, in whose department it was to defend the Circumlocution Office, put an orange in his pocket, and make a regular field-day of the occasion. Then would he come down to that house with a slap upon the table and meet the honourable gentleman foot to foot. Then would he be there to tell that honourable gentleman that the Circumlocution Office was not only blameless in this matter, but was commendable in this matter, was extollable to the skies in this matter. Then would he be there to tell that honourable gentleman that although the Circumlocution Office was invariably right, and wholly right, it never was so right as in this matter. Then would he be there to tell the honourable gentleman that it would have been more to his honour, more to his credit, more to his good taste, more to his good sense, more to half the dictionary of common places if he had left the Circumlocution Office alone and never approached this matter. Then would he keep one eye upon a coach or crammer from the Circumlocution Office below the bar, and smash the honourable gentleman with the Circumlocution Office account of this matter. And although one of two things always happened; namely, either that the Circumlocution Office had nothing to say, and said it, or that it had something to say of which the right honourable gentleman blundered one half and forgot the other; the Circumlocution Office was always voted immaculate by an accommodating majority.

The light-hearted Dickens reappears in *Our Mutual Friend*, but in the main his later works are marked by an air of gravity which corresponded to a change in the temper of the times and in the circumstances of the author's own life. It would be an exaggeration to pretend that Dickens, even at this stage, showed any signs of being a man of ideas. In *Hard Times* and *Little Dorrit* there are flashes of genuine satire which enable one to reread those books with less impatience than the more typical works arouse, but the essential childishness and superficiality of Dickens are inescapable. Balzac had died before Dickens entered this final phase of his career, but already another Frenchman had arisen to dwarf him. *Little Dorrit* was published the same year as *Madame Bovary*, and the mere juxtaposition of the two at once settles the place of the English novelist; he is simply not grown up. Furthermore, both Dickens and Flaubert established a line of fiction, and the one is infantile while the other is adult. To a superlative degree Dickens embodied that quality of mawkish respectability which differentiates modern English fiction from that of Continental Europe.

When Washington Irving wrote to Dickens of "that exquisite tact that enabled him to carry his reader through the veriest dens of vice and villainy without a breath to shock the ear or a stain to sully the robe of the most shrinking delicacy" he undoubtedly expressed an appreciation which is widely shared. In fact the same testimony has been proudly paid to a vast school of British and American novelists. Yet may one not legitimately ask what sort of morbid delight is this which brings writer and reader into contact with persons and situations from which they really shrink in horror? If an author likes to linger in "the veriest dens of vice," then intellectual honesty and artistic courage demand that he shall not pretend to be elsewhere. If such scenes have any genuine importance in the execution of his aim it must be because of their intrinsic effectiveness. Otherwise they are mere stage settings, artificial and unconvincing outside the world of pure make-believe. In fairy tales one does not consider the authenticity of material detail, but we expect of the modern novel something more than a fable for children; and it is because so many of our novelists do not realize this that fiction in English has ceased to offer anything to the intelligence, becoming nothing more than a means amongst others of killing time.

To demand that a writer shall give us only what he is prepared truthfully and honestly to describe is not, as some think, to insist that he shall outstep Zola in the inventorying of Nana's bedroom or Coupeau's kitchen. All that one asks is that, if he introduces us to Nana, she shall not be palmed off as a species of Little Nell. William Dean Howells, according to his latest biographer, wrote forty volumes in which "adultery is never pictured; seduction never; divorce once and sparingly . . . marriage discordant to the point of cleavage only once and in the same novel with the divorce; crime only once with any fullness; . . . politics never; religion passingly and superficially; science only in crepusucular psychology; mechanics, athletics, bodily exploits or collisions, very rarely." Whatever may be thought of this conception of the function of the novel, Howells had at least the courage of his omissions and did not try to include surreptitiously, as it were, what he conceived to be unpleasant or undesirable. He did not qualify for that strange test of merit which Washington Irving applied to Dickens. It is curious to notice that this list of Howells's taboos is almost a summary of Dickens's themes, yet the English novelist was no less squeamish than the American; he was simply less logical.

He was, however, more astute, not deliberately but unwittingly and instinctively; for he was able to satisfy that profound Anglo-Saxon yearning for appearances and compromises. Had Flaubert described Bill Sikes and Nancy, Dickens would not have made it one of his bravura pieces on the lecture platform—nor would Flaubert, for that matter, had he bethought himself of that lucrative aid to literary fame. Nobody ever congratulated the creator of Madame Bovary on having concluded that superb analysis "without a breath to shock the ear," for he so decidedly shocked the ears of the Second Empire that its well-known pruderies were outraged to the point of indicting him. Neither then nor since, nevertheless, could any intelligent person be found to argue that "the robe of the most shrinking delicacy" was stained by Flaubert's regard for his own artistic integrity. Therein lies all the difference between a novelist who knows what the public wants and one who knows only what he himself must and can do, between a great creative genius and a public entertainer. Their aims and their methods are as far apart as their fields; the one deals with life, the other with conventions.

The inevitable conclusion to the premise of the Victorian novel is a literature for grown-up children, which becomes, in the last analysis, a literature to be read in childhood. Hence the statement of Brandes about Scott which I have already quoted, and which may well stand for all that group of read but unreadable nineteenth century English novelists. If one begins young enough to be still in the omnivorous stage of reading it is possible to absorb Dickens with appropriate rapture, and it is sometimes possible to take him up again and see him through the merciful glamour of one's youth. But the spectacle of a person of mature taste encountering Dickens for the first time would have about it an air of incongruity as unbecoming as the sight of a man of forty stuffing himself with cream puffs in schoolboy fashion. The meal would prove also equally indigestible. Such defiances of nature are compatible only with youth. Then the receptive faculties are more developed than the critical, and pleasure is unrestrained by reflection. Thus it is without difficulty that one accepts the conventions of Dickens's unreal world where all the stage properties, scenery, and costumes are of the best quality, but the pretense of life is unsustained. Here are good humor and fantastic imagination, tears and thrills, a delightful fairyland in a realistic setting—everything that makes Charles Dickens an excellent writer for children.

MUD, MUSSOLINI, AND THE MOTOR

The Tale of a Colombian Journey

BY WILLIAM McFEE

IT was said by those who claimed an interest in the future prosperity and welfare of their visitor that the only way to go from Cartagena to Barranquilla was by steamer. It was true, they said, that a trail led around La Popa and across the swampy delta-lands to the city on the Magdalena, but it was not a route to be commended to anyone who wished to take back to North America memories favorable to Colombia. Words to that effect. Yes, it was even conceded that a motor car was known at times to get through, not "without novelty" as the Spanish say, but that too was fortuitous and no man could tell what might transpire on the way.

This was, all unknown to those kind friends and counselors, a fatal argument. To one who has always traveled within the bonds of discipline, to whom even enemy bombs and shells in the War never gave the feeling of being outside his conventional environment, the notion of a motor-car ride through an unknown land and with a chance of adventure appealed with irresistible power. Once it was admitted he could do it, he gave his friends no peace until he found the office where a large and smudged poster, homemade by the proprietor, announced that he would contract to carry his patrons on the following Friday to Barranquilla, with Security, Dispatch, and Felicity, leaving at ten o'clock with the utmost promptitude. Tickets would be obsequiously bestowed upon intending voyagers in return for the sum of ten pesos gold, a highly reasonable amount of baggage being admitted without extra charge. Other information, in Spanish not to be guessed at by one who has no more than a memory of the Latin tongue, was added in smaller letters.

The office was just off the corner of one of the squares, and ranged in front of a pent-house not far away was a fleet of three ancient vehicles bearing on their radiators an assortment of honored names. Those Americans who find it impossible to approve of homemade cars and so go to Europe, at vast expense, for their locomotion, should investigate the records of some of these old heroes from Detroit who take year after year of killing punishment in exile, who carry spare springs on their running-boards and spare crank-shafts in their tool-boxes, who never get a heartening coat of enamel or any of the usual little touches of affection from the accessory shop. Never does a crushed fender get straightened or a splintered windshield renewed. However, Señor Salcedo Maria, the enterprising Colombian who has lost patience with a government which has not yet realized the necessity for roads, takes care that the interior gadgets of his machines have due attention from time to time. They have to make their own road, it appears, and you note compensating spring-shackles, snubbers, and recoil straps in place. The limestone dust of the Barranquilla district has scoured the paint and enamel and plating from the corners, and the four spare tires behind show where they have borne the heat and burden of the day.

It appears, on inquiry, there is a place available in this modern diligence and the ten gold pesos are handed over. Nothing now remains save to institute tactful inquiries concerning the activities of a famous but invisible laundress who promised delivery without fail three days ago. It is possible she is of a humorous turn—since the message comes back by the small negro boy that she has been having a baby and so has got behind with the laundry, but it will be round in the morning.

And so it is, very damp indeed and suffering somewhat when crushed into an over-full valise; but it is nearly ten already and the coach is at the door to take me to the bureau of Señor Salcedo Maria, whose car is advertised to start with almost incredible punctuality. Mine host and his major-domo, colored gentlemen with features of burnished ebony, and the usual swarm of servants are on hand to bid farewell to their one and only tourist, the latter being persuaded to accept a modest *solatium* for services rendered. It may be remarked here, while we are galloping up the *Calle de Universdad*, that the traveler must be prepared, in New Granada, to meet at the moment of departure from his hotel a small army of servants of whose very existence he has been kept in ignorance. They materialize out of the circumambient ether, they rise from unexpected crevices in the building, they appear suddenly halfway down apparently empty stairways, and they bear before them extended palms. They have obscure sources of informaton and are the familiar demons of the cab driver who has been summoned to carry you away. Their clothes would be scorned by an unprincipled scarecrow and their religion seems to have prohibited ablutions. Yet it is good policy to do something for them and it must be recorded that their ideas of reward are modest. Even if you give nothing they will not withdraw their favor from you, but will let you depart amid valedictory smiles and the indestructible courtesy of their race. *Vaya Usted con Dios!*

So we do, and arrive punctually at Señor Salcedo's door, but the car is not

A PICNIC SPOT ON THE MAGDALENA RIVER

A NATIVE HUT AND ITS INHABITANTS—HUMAN AND PORCINE

yet ready for the great adventure. A passenger, who resembles a good-natured Mussolini in yellow riding breeches and black leggings, is seated on a stout valise and is evidently despondent over the information that a small boy is offering him through the office cage. This small boy, who may be a son of Señor Salcedo, has an air of being in captivity in the cage, like a songbird, and instead of persevering with a typewriter he has in there, continually stands up and talks treble Spanish very fast through the bars, and it sounds to an uninstructed ear very like bird language. At this point two other passengers arrive: a woman and her small daughter, and the small boy converses with the lady in tones of great animation. One feels, watching him, hopping from his perch by the typewriter to the front of his cage and back, that it would be very difficult to lure him into school. His fine black eyes and expressive hands indicate he has found his vocation. He is optimistic and is equal to conversing amiably with a schoolmaster, should one appear. And he seems to be justified in his confident attitude, for a venerable six-cylinder touring car roars up with much blaring of the horn, quite like the coach and six of olden times when it came into the tavern yard.

Even now, however (and it is ten-thirty), that mysterious faculty the Latins possess in a very high degree—of enjoying the present moment so much they seem reluctant to relinquish its exquisite savor; that propensity for investing the most trivial human function with torrents and cataracts and cloudbursts of talk—prevents our departure. Mussolini converses with the driver and the driver's assistant, a lank youth engaged in lashing our baggage on the running-boards where it will receive maximum damage or be most effectually inconvenient should one wish to get out. Señor Salcedo appears and talks to the other passengers and the boy in the cage trills musically to all and sundry. Two other passengers arrive who complete our company and immediately join in the talk. Considerable ingenuity has been used in the design of some of the baggage. Bundles are offered to the assistant chauffeur that are baffling in their polyhedral complexity. Everyone save the foreigner is well fortified with provisions for the journey, and it occurs to him he

might have time to get something. The chauffeur, however, seems telepathically aware of this idea and immediately sounds a terrific blast on the horn to inform the burgesses of Cartagena Eroica, Queen of the Oceans, that the departure of the *automoril a Barranquilla* is impending. But the small boy in the cage, who has been having a great time with a telephone, screams something and we wait a little longer, enjoying more torrents of conversation. All seven seats are occupied and the interstices filled with small parcels, so that the tonneau-space is practically solid, with Mussolini and his companions appearing above as though partially buried alive. The running-boards and front-fenders are full of heavy baggage and there is even a dress-basket tied to the radiator. At last, with a roar and a most theatrical backfire, we dash across the square into the *Plaza de los Coches*, just within the main gate, and then, much to the astonishment of one passenger at least, pull up, back into the curb, and are at once surrounded by a crowd of interested and unoccupied citizens.

This is the Spanish way, and it has the prime virtue of giving the roaming traveler that precious second chance to observe. It gives him the second glance up the street which stays in his memory and perhaps becomes pregnant with meaning in the future when his fecund fancy, like the oyster with the microscopic irritant, enfolds the hard and sharp impression within the smooth and brilliant emollience of a new-fashioned tale. So he hopes, as he looks around him, noting the yellow clock-tower clean cut against the blue and gold of the sunlight of New Granada; the dramatic confluence of two streets, like the meeting of two dark rivers in a jungle of commerce; the romantic shadows beneath the arcade where are the stalls of food hawkers in a press of customers; and just as his chauffeur evokes a last whoop on his horn and the parcel for which we are waiting is flung into the car, a friar in a brown corded habit, with a huge bag of a hood behind his tonsured poll and a staff and scrip for offerings in his grimy grasp, steps off the sidewalk and shambles away toward the Cathedral as Franciscans have done these four hundred years. The next moment the car dashes through

THE ROAD, AS THE SPANISH SAY, "DIED"

the main gate and starts, without any further pretense at delay, since it is now eleven-twenty, for Barranquilla.

It is a statement provocative of much mirth from those who are not Spaniards that all Spanish towns are beautiful a mile away. The obvious retort — that many American and English towns are not beautiful even when several miles away — comes with a shock to unthinking patriots but it is true none the less. And it may be asserted that in Colombia it is the modern extensions beyond the ancient boundaries which affront the eye more than the original cities. Along the coast these extensions are largely the result of a negroid population that seems to spawn rather than propagate in a legitimate fashion, so rapidly does it increase. And so, as we rock and sway forward through the suburbs of Cartagena, we find lines of thatched huts that might be exhibited from Central Nigeria, and the roadway is littered with sucking pigs, hens with attendant broods, and naked children. These warrens are alternated with sections in which fine houses are buried in palms and poincianas and flaming begonias, their gardens and balconies looking out over a calm lagoon.

ROPING THE WHEELS TO MAKE THEM HOLD

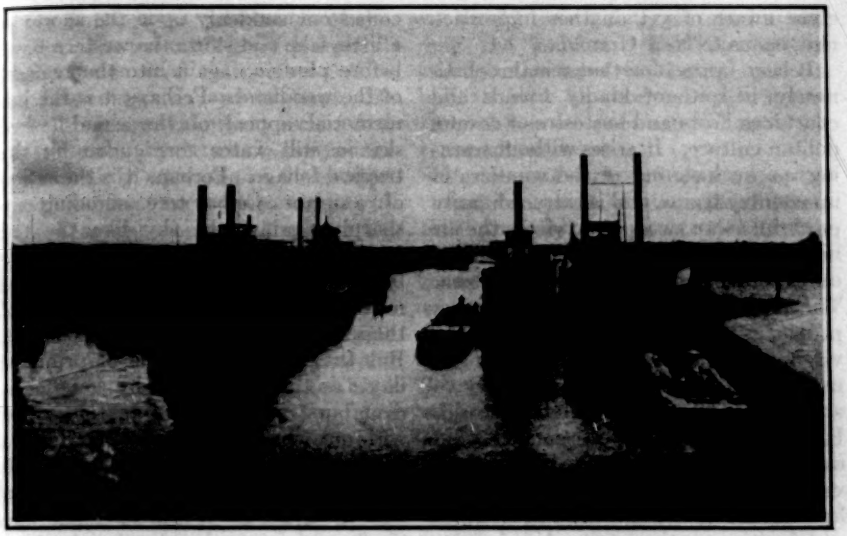
But soon these habitations cease to delight the eye, and the road, skirting the great lift of La Popa, runs through a sparse scrub and becomes a mere cattle-track across the marshy waste. And here is a strange impression to be noted, an impression not to be entirely explained by the physical phenomena. For as the road clears the houses and runs dustily for a while along an outlying elevation of La Popa hill, it is lined with prickly pears and cactus, and donkeys with women and children pass us, and there is a white church like a mosque, and the seasoned traveler suddenly thinks of the road out of Joppa on the way to Jerusalem. It goes in a moment, that impression of the Holy Land, but it is very vivid and valuable. It furnishes a key to a great deal that is puzzling to the Northerner when he comes to New Granada, since it suggests to him that these folk are the heirs, through Moorish Spain, of an oriental tradition. They are a people of flocks and herds, of simple habits, with a limited vocabulary

and an objective belief in their religion that is somewhat beyond our sophisticated souls. Their large dark eyes rest upon us as we storm past them, leaving them enveloped in choking white dust. They bear us no malice for shoving them to the wall, but they give one the impression sometimes of being able to wait any number of centuries for their turn to shove. There is something disturbing in the dignity of their bearing, since for the most part they are but peasants and have no working conceptions of our way of living at all. "A hundred years behind the times!" the modern salesman may mutter, but if he could only identify for us the spiritual excellence of his own particular times it would help us to condemn the peasants. The salesman is trying to explain the other to himself, and is only half successful. It is not easy to describe a race that seems to be intellectually stunned.

You find this quality in them all—in merchants and mechanics, in coal-passers and chauffeurs. The glance they fling to you in passing is not indicative of an appeal but of a mood of wonder. The hazards of history have afforded them no cumulative causes for arrogance, but they have inherited pride. They are all proud. Even Mussolini, as I call him, half immersed among his parcels and offering in a most friendly way his scanty English, has pride in his demeanor. The lady with her little girl is neither rich nor handsome nor of ancient lineage, yet she preserves in her manner a dignity none can gainsay. The little girl is even more impressive, though her cheap cotton frock reaches only halfway down her thighs and her little brown elbows are grubby. And our chauffeur, in his torn blue shirt and oily hands and rather damaged boots, has the air of a proud pretender in exile. He drives well enough, but it is the skill of a fatalist, of one who is capable of driving us all to perdition but who refrains on account of pride.

And in truth he has enough to do to occupy his mind now that the road has "died," as they say here, and our progress is accompanied by the sharp crackle of foliage against the sides and top of the car. The ground is moist and sometimes widens to make room for a cattle-wallow, and great delicacy is required to choose a happy mean between the morass and the plunging tree boles. It would be almost an evasion to say that in the process we who travel are shaken up. It would be much more accurate to describe us as resembling the molecules in an atom. We collide and rebound, we rock and sway, and we come down with a crash among the baggage. Our interest in the scenery is diminished by our anxiety about our valises, which seem to be tumbling from the running-board and require an occasional halt to tighten their girths of twine. Our chauffeur's assistant enjoys the opportunity thus afforded for leaping over the side and demonstrating his skill as a maker of knots. His knots are admirable, having but one defect, that neither he nor anyone else can undo them.

And soon after passing through a village apparently inhabited by African pigmies—since none save small naked children and young swine are visible—we begin to ascend a low range of hills that are the last outlying spurs of the Departamento de Bolívar west of the Magdalena. The track, it must be remembered, is no more than a bridle-path and there is no grading. The streams flow westward into the sea and the direction we follow is mostly at right angles to them. So we come upon short but steep places that prove our engine to have an excellent constitution, especially when we descend into the dry bed of a stream rather than test the bridge. And this is a rule rather than the exception. Mussolini, in reply to a look of astonishment, wags his finger before his nose (which is the universal Latin-American negative) and says the bridges are "no good." So down we go and miraculously ascend the



BARRANQUILLA PLANS GREAT DOCKS AND A COMMERCIAL FUTURE

farther bank. Presently we confront a slope of reddish clay that defeats us, and while the rear wheels continue to spin we slip back until we bring up against a fallen tree. Here our assistant chauffeur comes into action, producing from his store a coil of old rope which he proceeds to wrap around the tires. This turns out to be much more efficient than it looks. A sort of community feeling, of solidarity, which has arisen among us induces us to assist as members of a crew rather than as passengers. We become absorbed in the question whether there is enough rope. We walk away with the fall of it and suggest more sophisticated hitches than our young friend has hitherto learned. And then, with a boiling radiator and a grand heave behind by all of us—save the chauffeur and the ladies—we send her over the top. We discover it is indeed the crest of our small foothills, and climb in, very much refreshed and rather muddy from our toil.

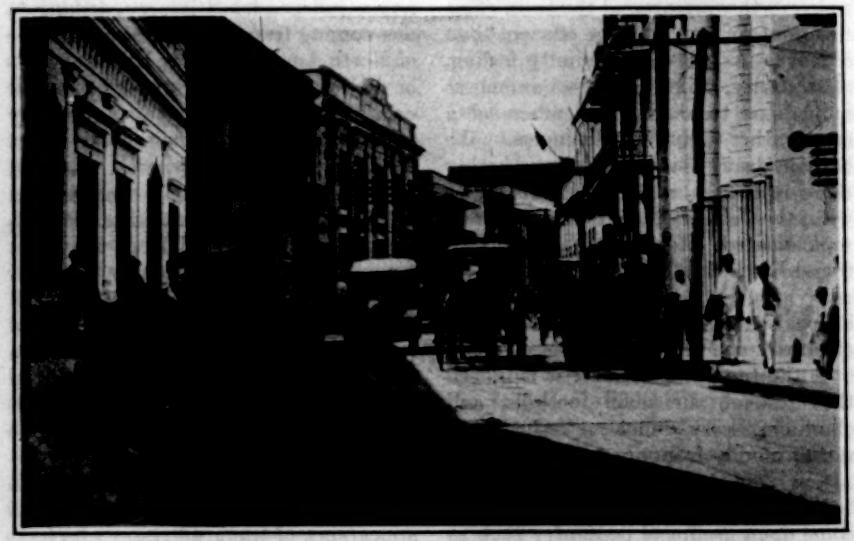
It is in this valley ahead of us that we come upon groups of peasantry such as could survive only in a land devoid of the means of transportation. The earth is yet rich from rotting timbers, and now and again we breathe the heavy smoke of burning wood that drifts across the way from where the jungle is being cleared to grow cane. They are, as we would say, small-holders, and their economic independence is very striking to one coming from the intricate existence of North America. They have no wants or desires they cannot supply from their own land and labor or by a monthly visit to the small town not far away. Bananas, plantains, yuccas, mangos, sweet potatoes, and sugar cane grow in patches about their wattled huts which we pass with a squall from the horn. Now and then we see them by the sugar mill, a contrivance of hardwood wheels and rollers standing under an open-sided roof. Donkeys bring the cane and oxen drag the pole of the mill round and round. We see them in their fields where they pause for a moment to watch the *automovil* go by. And particularly in the pose of the women, with their shawled heads and their general appearance of tragic actresses who have been sentenced to hard labor, we be-

come aware of yet another impression indigenous to New Granada.

It is an impression that remains obstinately, in spite of kindly friends and courteous hosts and hostesses of cosmopolitan culture. It arises without warning as we look out of the windows of up-country trains, and is extraordinarily powerful as we swoop down from the air in a hydroplane at some forlorn village on the muddy bank of the Magdalena. They stand and look, these grave brown people, as though their roots were in the virgin soil beneath them, and they make us feel that we are come not merely to another country but to another world. It is inescapable, that illusion of being extra-terrestrial visitants, the winged victors of space and time. It steals the heart and engenders that most delicate and fugitive sentiment one has for the folk in fairy tales and ancient legends. For with all your good will and uplifting sympathy, that is about as near as you will get to the business and bosoms of these alien rustic souls.

And there is one place in this part of the country where the track, after passing through a stretch of forest land, comes out suddenly upon the shores of a little lake and skirts the western bank before plunging again into the twilight of the woodland. Perhaps it is the immemorial appeal of the cloud-flecked sky in still water surrounded by the tropical foliage. Perhaps it is the vision of a giant Ceiba tree standing up sharply against the sky like the tall motionless plume of a distant shell-burst. Perhaps it is the pelican that moves magnificently across the face of the waters like a miniature pterodactyl. But the impression is one of primeval days, as though we had by some accident burst not only into another world with our wonderful internal combustion engine, but had traversed time as well and caught that world at its beginnings. And the great green lizard perched motionless on a tree near by does nothing to lessen the illusion.

It was not so long after we left the village a few miles farther on, where we filled the radiator and exchanged salutations with Mr. Salcedo's local representative, that we began to experience "the novelty" which the Spaniard drily



MODERNITY IS THE KEYNOTE OF BARRANQUILLA

accepts as the inevitable fortune of the traveler. For the track grew damp and deceptively covered with leaves. The ooze flew outward fanwise from the wheels, and our chauffeur assumed a more than usually fatalistic expression. He was plainly uncertain of the ground since there were divers paths winding in and out among the tree trunks. He wrenched the wheel this way and that, and we struck submerged tree trunks with ominous twangings of the springs. And almost before we could comprehend it, for the engine never failed us, we were in up to the axles and the hind wheels were whirling helplessly in a smother of black porridge.

It looked as though we had reached the end of our tether. There was evidently another fifty yards of it to be traversed and no help in sight. And forty kilometers to Barranquilla! In addition to this it looked like rain and it was late afternoon. The assistant chauffeur, taking an active leap from the running-board, found firm foothold among the shrubs and, finding a short branch, afforded us a means of exit.

But the chauffeur began to resemble more and more a pretender in exile. To our sympathetic murmurs he returned an entirely hopeless shrug of the shoulders, extracted a bottle of beer and a piece of cheese from the door-pocket, vaulted ashore, sat down against a tree and, as far as a wandering stranger could determine, gave us up as a bad job.

It was here that the writer and Mussolini began to form a coalition with a view to getting to Barranquilla. We were in a low forest land; the morass in which we were stuck was due to a spring close by, and nothing was to be gained by procrastination. So we came face to face with the essential problem—how to get out. The loss of heart on the part of the gentleman in charge of the expedition was to be deplored but could be surmounted. Mussolini, his square and belligerent features contracted in a frown, seemed to be of very different metal. *Si, si*, it could be done. First, we should have assistance. At his bidding the assistant chauffeur set off through the trees to the village. In half an hour he returned with apparently the entire population, headed by the small boys.

Problems of engineering were now discussed by means of eloquent gestures. *Si* — precisely, we must elevate the wheels. An expedition of two set forth to find a suitable sapling for a lever while we rolled a burnt log into position as a fulcrum. It slowly sank into the black slime, so another was laid upon it. The arriving population, who seemed to enjoy the whole business with considerable relish, were deputed to collect leaves and branches. They returned in relays, holding their plunder aloft as though celebrating some antique festival of the woodland: an illusion admirably supported by their entire innocence of clothing and their dramatic attitudes as they cast the greenery upon the oozing mire.

So you must see it in your mind's eye, you whose domains are threaded and ribboned with tarred highways, hard as iron and smooth as black satin—that scene in the forest twilight: the figures of white and brown and black men intermingling as they hurried to and fro about a frowsy motor car sitting like a hen in the primordial slime. Up to their knees in sloshy liquid mud they are, as they move about, and the baggage on the running-boards is slowly sinking in.

Mussolini, whose real name is Jesus Balderamar—which gives one a startling insight into the objective quality of the Latin American's mind—frowns very much but radiates energy. Inspired by his example we seize the pole and essay to pry one wheel from its slough of despond. It is too large. A gentleman with a machete volunteers to taper it and in his enthusiasm nearly lays the tire open with a wandering swish of the twenty-four-inch blade. The chips fly while our chauffeur lolls disconsolately against the tree, tilting his beer bottle, scratching at times at the red ants who are advancing all over him. Once more

we make the attempt; the order to bear down is given, the wheel rises, and our pigmy rescuers—whose round heads and eyes emerge from their layers of dripping filth—hastily thrust leaves and twigs and branches beneath the wheel. So! We have made a start.

The other wheels do not rise quite as satisfactorily as this. There are slips owing to the greasy surface of our fulcrum and because we who bear down are hobbled with the peculiarly adhesive qualities of our enveloping mud. And once a squeak from an almost invisible infant who was toiling on its knees warned us to lift again quickly.

All this was not done, you will remember, in a turn of the hand. Our lady passenger who was seated patiently a little distance away, keeping her child from the great ant hills that seem so attractive to children, was pessimistic when assured she would soon be on her way. She did not speak but raised her arm in an expressive circular gesture toward the declining sun. That was true, we admitted, and began again with renewed ardor at our task.

And at last all was in order. The car stood on dry wood and bracken; behind the rear wheels a line of saplings had been laid in the ruts clear up to solid ground. The moment was come to put our labors to the test. Our chauffeur was induced to rise and again assume his rightful position. For three hours he had remained convinced we should never get out until Señor Salcedo sent another machine with a rope. Now he would have the melancholy pleasure of showing us all our toil had been in vain. He and Mussolini exchange staccato and reverberating sentences in incomprehensible coast-Spanish. Moreover, the radiator is dry. But the traveler from North America is prepared to back a car made in Detroit to travel fifty yards or so even with a dry radiator, and the pessimist is overruled. Moreover, how are we to get to Barranquilla if we go back? It is pointed out that a hasty survey has been made by some of us among the trees yonder, and with a copious layer of branches he can get through. Thus reassured, our pretender in exile decides to make a bid for fortune. The engine roars. Now come one, come all. To assist us, mud-encased negro boys come up out of the void as though freshly created from their mother-earth and not yet disengaged from the business of parturition, and lay hands on available projections. Mussolini on one side and a perspiring tourist on the other lead a chorus of co-ordinating shouts. The engine roars again, the wheels scutter and jam, and at last take hold. She moves. There are redoubled shouts and heaves, a small nigger tumbles and is yanked back from a premature death, and we are triumphantly staggering after a retreating motor car as it regains terra firma. We shake hands with one another and empty our pockets of centavos and dimes and nickels for the population, who will probably talk of these great doings for many days. A can of very dirty water is poured into the radiator and we set out on the detour among the trees.

It is getting on toward evening when we arrive, having struck at last an authentic road at a fine clean town with an enormous church standing up sharply against the western glow. There is a spacious plaza in front and wide sandy streets, where we halt a while to stay a hunger that has become insistent. We invade a store, to the astonishment of the proprietor, and order beer and bread and canned herrings and cheese, and distribute them to our party. The population collects about the doorway and stares with disconcerting curiosity as we devour our provender. They indeed regard us as denizens of a distant sphere, and they are sufficiently urbanized to permit an obvious envy in their unwinking gaze. Fortunate beings we must be, since we come from the great city of Cartagena and in a few hours will be in the still more magnificent city of Barranquilla, where are all sorts of

metropolitan delights. So they seem to think as they gaze at our moving jaws.

And then it grows dark on the way in between avenues of trees, and the headlights send long shafts ahead that illumine and augment to enormous size the donkeys loaded with little haystacks whom we overtake. We are sliding down a long tunnel in the darkness into Barranquilla, and on the edges of the shafts of light shine the eyes, like burning rubies, of nighthawks waiting for their prey. Sometimes they meet us in mid-air and fly towards us—the terrible eyes gleaming with sullen ferocity—and then vanish in the gloom. Silence has fallen upon us for we are weary, and the little girl is asleep. The houses are continuous now, and the lights of stores throw yellow beams athwart our path. The road has become wide and crossed by the dry beds of rivers of rain water, so that we rock like a ship in a swell after a storm. We turn down a street of white houses with huge bars in the windows, and Mussolini—Señor Jesus Balderamar—alights. This is his *casa*. He raps with determination upon the casement; the door swings wide; a handsome dark lady, with three dark daughters peeping over her shoulder, bids the master of the house welcome after his many perils. We shake hands, much regretting our inability to converse and express our feelings. We move on and deposit the lady and her small daughter at a more humble door. One by one our friends vanish into their homes, and finally the stranger, murmuring "*Pension Inglesa*," is deposited in front of a vague building that seems to have been his abode in some former existence; and blinking very much in the light of the office, he discovers he was expected hours ago and had been given up for lost; his friends have been telephoning and will be very glad to hear he is at last arrived.

All of which is highly agreeable after so arduous a journey. So is the shower, once divested of the heavy mud-caked boots and leggings and riding gear. And better than all is the appearance of friends who at once divine the appetite that will brook no delay, having made such journeys themselves, and we adjourn to a fine white club where a noble meal is produced with all the accessories of civilization.

That, of course, is the keynote of Barranquilla—modernity. It has neither antiquity nor the jewel-like loveliness of Cartagena. It sprawls, without shame, along the dusty limestone bank of the great river and differs only in size from all those riparian agglomerations between here and Girardot. It seems to ache to be modern. It has banks and stores and factories, and a railroad will some day crawl south to Calomar through Sabanalarga. It has opera, and movies like sinister dreams. It is growing, and you are commanded to admire its American-plan suburb. When the mouth of the river is dredged —a scheme relentlessly pursued by the prominent burgesses of the town—deep-water ships will tie up at docks where now the limekilns and quarries lie concealed in the tall grass. This will mean more banks and stores and movies. The clubs will be more magnificent and the motor cars will no longer rupture their mechanisms in passing down the street.

And one cannot but wonder at times whether those who wish so earnestly to transform Barranquilla into a replica of St. Louis or Omaha, and who see it always from the seat of an automobile, are aware of the essential spirit of the inert city. For it looks very different indeed when one walks. It looks very different when the observer loafs on the high sidewalks at the corners, or sits on a rawhide chair at the doorway of a thatched hovel. He must leave the clubs with their tennis and cocktails and billiards and their piled copies of *Punch* and *Life* and *The NewYork Times*. These are the barricades erected by the wide-awake aliens, from behind which they attack the older civilization. These are sym-

bols of progress, and the seats of an automobile are the chariots of an invading army which by peaceful penetration is loosening the fabric of Iberian culture. And soon, as far as Barranquilla is concerned, it will be disintegrated and lost. For the artist that is a matter for regret, since the new dispensation is essentially a materialistic contrivance and the invention of alien races, while the other is of a spiritual nature and leaves the soul a measure of liberty we are often too wise and too hygienic to understand.

So the philosophic voyager, comforted though he will be by the charming hospitality pressed upon him, thrilled even by the enthusiastic schemes for golf links and country clubs and universities and docks for ships loaded with gramaphones and radio-sets and enameled baths and more and more motor cars—will sometimes slip away to see Barranquilla, as its boosters never do. A good time is when the dancing has begun on the hard courts behind the club, the fox-trot music coming scratchily from the gramophone among the shrubs and mingling with the hiss of rubber-soled shoes on the sanded concrete as the couples sway and oscillate beneath the moon among the palm trees. For a while the intolerable ache in their exiled hearts is soothed by a memory of their homeland. For a while they have forgotten that inexorable tropic life besieging them so closely, that steady drain on their interior resources as they cope with the problems of existence amid the debris of Spanish rule. So we can slip away down the bumpy road, deep in calcined dust, to where the cottage doors beneath thatched roofs stand wide to the silver night; and perhaps we shall hear the click of castanets and the stamp of a red-heeled shoe keeping time with the seductive harmonies of a *marimba*. The women of Colombia are not beautiful save in their hair and their love of rhythm. Their expression is austere and repelling, and they are innocent of the arts of gallantry. So in dancing they have a remote, abstracted air, as though they were in a trance and not really in Barranquilla in nineteen hundred and twenty-four, but in that prehistoric city that lay baking in the hot sunlight so many æons ago, when emissaries from Tiahuanaco came down the great river on the way to Quiriguá and Copán, and passed a night in diversion before setting sail across the great sea. And when you come out and follow the wide streets beneath the moon, that illusion of a dead city besets you. You turn a corner and there is no one to challenge the impression; the crumbling adobe walls remind you of dead places like Pompeii and Herculaneum, and you wonder whether that jolly Barranquilla you left a few hours ago is not the dream, and this white corpse stretched out in the limestone dust beneath the moon the reality, the vestige of a forgotten empire.

THE LION'S MOUTH

UNEMPLOYMENT THROUGH THE REBEL'S EYES

BY MALCOLM LOGAN

THAT rich phrase "out of work" is open to many interpretations. In the minds of those who take their work seriously it evokes the picture of a shabby failure shivering on a park bench; the completely cynical regard it as the equivalent of "out of the frying pan into the fire"; but the *révolté*, the man who does not fit into the pattern of modern life, sees in it as clearly as in the words "out of prison" the glittering idea of liberty.

I am in the latter class. For me there is no adventure more exciting and stimulating than that of losing a job. Yet even when work has become intolerable it is with the greatest reluctance that I discard it. Inertia disguises itself under the mask of common sense, which is usually nothing more than supine acquiescence to necessity. As Gulliver was bound to earth by a thousand cobweb threads, so are we held by myriad ties to accustomed ways of life. The words of the unfortunate daughter of the Pope in *Candide* concerning our reluctance to end our lives applies with equal force to my hesitation in leaving a despised position: "A hundred times I was on the verge of killing myself; yet still I loved life. This ridiculous foible is perhaps one of our most fatal characteristics; for is there anything more absurd than to wish to carry continually a burden which one can always throw down? to detest existence and yet cling to one's existence? in brief, to caress the serpent which devours us, till he has eaten our very heart?" That same folly makes me hold to the unpleasant things I know rather than venture after the unknown, which may conceivably be worse.

There always comes a day, however, when sublime madness will not be denied; when soft April beckons me along strange roads; or when autumn, dying magnificently, makes me see that my life, too, may be shaped into something beautiful. My years of monotonous work, those years that the locust has eaten, seem then the bitterest waste of opportunity. And so, filled again with the desire to spend some of life in passionate living, I revolt.

How sweet are those first few moments of freedom! In a sweeping vision I see the world's broad meadows, its long adventurous roads, its seas, its cloudy mountains. I become conscious of the immortal loveliness which dead men have somehow wrung from life for me. The high dreams of earlier years are remembered and I vow that I shall follow them again. Godlike I stride out of the office where my late fellow-workers still bend over their desks, and I am sorry for them that their eyes cannot be opened, that they cannot know the drunken ecstasy of liberty.

There always comes to me in these moments the illusion that I have made a sharp clean break with the past. The docile worker has died that a rebel might be born. And the rebel shall do all the things the docile man dreamed of doing: see strange cities, read books, make love

to girls, listen to music, talk to people and find some understanding of them. I feel all new, strong, courageous.

Unfortunately that first mood passes. I begin to realize that this can be only an interlude. Eventually my neck must be thrust voluntarily under the yoke. While I am working the rigid economic laws are forgotten, as we forget the laws of gravity while we obey them. When I am out of work, however, they are instantly perceptible. I am faced with the brutal fact that I must work or starve. That is a sobering reflection; it blunts the fine edge of joy. Thus at the outset the dark shadow of work falls across my path to make freedom a little unquiet.

Freedom from dulling drudgery is so difficult to attain that it too often becomes an end in itself instead of the first step towards a more intense life. There are many obstacles to be overcome before it is gained. The opinion of the stolid, unimaginative world haunts me; there are days and nights of mental searching when I wonder if the call of liberty is not the voice of self-indulgence. Those who have never felt the hatred of monotony which is mine have no conception of the conflict which precedes revolt. Walter Lippmann knows of it when he writes, "The sheer struggle for freedom is an exhausting thing, so exhausting that the people who lead it are often unable to appreciate its uses."

Nor is liberty a pleasant state of life. It is a bitter drink even for the strong, and poison for the weak. It requires a self-discipline undreamed of in the world where life runs in neat little grooves. It may become license or it may be made barren. Sometimes the knowledge that it will soon end paralyzes him who has won it. Sometimes it brings about a frenzy of industry which is misdirected and brings no results. Those who have won liberty are truly conscious "of the splendor of life and of its awful brevity." That knowledge can never be banished; it follows the rebel always, a constant reminder that nothing on earth, even freedom, is complete and perfect.

To escape that I usually go away from the scene of my recent employment. One of the most persistent of my illusions is that the past can be left behind with its background. The same belief, I am told, is cherished by the ostrich. I reflect that I can leave this place with all its failures, compromises, wasted opportunities, and go to some new bright city where I shall do everything exactly right. Shall I enact there the same unlovely drama? Decidedly not! That is part of the dead and buried past.

So I pack and leave. There is a certain sense of adventure in being carried on a train or boat away from the old life into a new one which may be full of beauty and accomplishment. It creates a spurious feeling of progress. That is probably the American in me who is drugged into such a belief by swift motion.

In the new city there are many absorbing things to be seen, heard, and discussed. The time which should be spent in seeking work is taken up in other ways. A hundred ideas for prose masterpieces germinate in my mind, but all are so importunate that I cannot give any the development it deserves. I walk through crowded streets, knowing that drama is all around me but that I may never hope to discover it. Freedom is so brief, and there is so much to be done!

Until my money gets dangerously low the days and nights pass in a glamorous procession. There comes a time, however, when the necessity of finding work becomes acute. And this task of hunting it is the most distasteful of any toil. Work, like love, avoids those who seek it too ardently. Universal suspicion centers upon the man who is unwise enough to let people see he needs a position.

It is in this period just before the end of liberty that the rebel undergoes the worst hardships. The physical side of it is bad enough; but the real struggle is to maintain self-respect. I always have an uneasy feeling that I am one with the ragged men who stand in front of employment agencies, reading the

cards tacked there and radiating an atmosphere of hopelessness. I must perpetually reassure myself that my unemployment is deliberate and chosen, while theirs is accidental.

Fortunately, I usually get a position before the belief that I am merely shiftless overcomes me. This is the crowning joy of unemployment. Safety is welcome then; a little moment of rest while the forces of revolt gather again in me is almost as sweet as freedom.

This question may naturally arise: why, since revolt ends in failure and hardships, don't you settle down? My answer is that no matter how barren my revolts may be of concrete accomplishment, they are worth all the miseries they entail. For they open to me a window through which I see, if only for a brief interval, all the beauty, the cruelty, the magnificent sweep and surge of life.

GIFTS AND TROPHIES

BY SOPHIE KERR UNDERWOOD

SOMETHING ought to be done about them, something drastic, something thorough. It is doubtless too late to get anything on this subject into the platform of any of the political parties. Maybe the Lucy Stone League might be induced to help—when they are through with the order that married women in Government service must draw their pay by their married names. And there is always the chance of running an extra amendment to the Constitution, now that we've got the habit. Anyway, as I said, something ought to be done.

Consider the case of our esteemed Secretary of Agriculture. A little while ago all the Sunday gravure sections carried a picture of this amiable gentleman standing between two other amiable gentlemen, each of whom appeared to be holding in his arms a cow about the size of a well-grown Chow dog. The caption beneath revealed the fact that these were not real cows, but "interesting models of the true Holstein cattle" which had been presented to the Secretary by the National Holstein Cattle Breeders' Association.

It is safe to say that no true woman saw that picture and read that caption without also instantly imagining a little domestic drama, about as follows:

THE SECRETARY (*entering his own home and speaking with suspicious enthusiasm*): Oh, what do you think! The Holstein Association has given me a couple of fine models of true Holstein cattle—you know, papier-mâché things, *very* cleverly made. They look exactly like real cows, only not so large. Isn't that splendid?

MRS. SECRETARY (*warily*). Where do you intend to put them?

THE SECRETARY. They'd look perfectly fine on the piano.

MRS. SECRETARY. Over my dead body!

THE SECRETARY. Well, why not one on each side of the fireplace? So unique!

MRS. SECRETARY. Unique, certainly—but they are not going on each side of the fireplace.

THE SECRETARY. Hang it, they're beautiful cows. And I'm the Secretary of Agriculture, aren't I? I've got to put them *somewhere*.

MRS. SECRETARY (*coldly*.) I fail to see the necessity, no matter what you are.

THE SECRETARY (*trying diplomacy*). Where do *you* think they should go, my dear?

Never mind the answer. But I am willing to bet dollars to snowflakes that there are no Holstein models decorating that home at the present moment, and that there will be none hereafter. And after the cattle may come the horses, the hogs, the innumerable breeds of poultry.

But let us shift the scene. Picture to yourself the Metropolitan Opera House,

in gala array, crowded by an eager, enthusiastic audience. The first act of "L'Amore dei Tre Re" has been divinely sung by Bori the Beautiful and her worthy associates. The curtain has fallen, but before its ample golden draperies stands no less a personage than Mr. Paul Cravath, and he is speaking words of high praise and compliment to the composer of the opera. At last Mr. Montemezzi himself is haled upon the stage and stands, beside Mr. Cravath, listening modestly to these laudations.

Then . . . "As a token of our appreciation" . . . and "In commemoration of this occasion" . . . Behold one of the attendants of the opera house, a swarthy alien in plush knee-pants, entering on this scene and offering to Mr. Montemezzi, as Mr. Cravath makes the appropriate gestures—what? What indeed! A large heavy rectangular placque, covered with a raw shade of purple velvet and bearing a massive silver laurel wreath! What a jolly little gift! What a useful, practical, delightful *bijou et bibelot* to have around the house, especially on rainy days! No wonder Mr. Montemezzi could say but a few faltering words in return! If he had seized the wretched object and bashed Mr. Cravath and the knee-panted alien over their two heads with it he would have struck a much-needed blow for art and sincerity.

And what do you suppose Signora Montemezzi said when he went back to Italy and opened up the box and said, "The music-loving American people gave me that for composing 'The Love of Three Kings'."

Once more let us shift the scene. It is a dinner at a woman's club, a club whose membership represents the arts of literature and painting. The dinner is given in honor of a retiring President and also in honor of the President Elect.

While the members toy with their demi-tasses the retiring President rises to say a few words, just a few words, for she is not going to make a speech, oh no. The members settle themselves for at least forty minutes of intensive listening.

The retiring President tells of her devotion to the club, her admiration for its members and their achievements, her never-dying surprise that she should ever have been given the honor of heading such a glorious galaxy, her unworthiness, and her delight that her place is now filled by one who is all womankind supreme. She tells of her joy in the work of the club, of the aid and inspiration she has received from her fellow officers, their complete and cordial co-operation without which she would have perished by the wayside long since. And so on.

This is the first thirty minutes and the members are beginning to be fidgety. But the Retiring President is not done. She must say just one word more. She must pay a fitting tribute to the new incumbent.

And she does, she does. A tribute to her personality, her ideals, her intellect, her magnetism, her—well, she omits nothing save the name of her dressmaker. And she cannot refrain, says the Retiring One, from giving to this marvelous, this *ne plus ultra* successor of hers, under whose direction the club will inevitably march forward to a future of glittering magnificence—she cannot refrain from giving to her a little, little token of her own personal love and friendship and appreciation.

She produces from beneath the table—after a struggle—a large square package and the club comes up for a third time from beneath the engulfing tide of words to wonder what can be in it! More love, more friendship, more appreciation, all with a quiver in the voice—but at last the package is in the new President's hands and she is opening it and trying to look worthy and not annoyed.

The package contains an enormous photograph of the Retiring President in her best evening dress and ermine scarf, and it is elaborately, expensively framed. The story is a true one and the point of it is that the two women were about as

fond of each other as you, gentle reader, are of poison ivy.

What devil of mischance is it that enters into those who choose "presentation gifts" and makes them select—ninety-nine times out of a hundred—something the recipient doesn't want, couldn't want, hates at first sight, and yet dares not throw away?

And as for trophies—that is the same story, only worse!

Only last Wednesday I met a friend, a charming woman, usually serene and calm, but on this occasion flushed with anger, eyes bright with nervous tears, lips drawn into a line of desperate resolution.

"I am on my way downtown to see a lawyer about divorcing Ned," she said. "He has begun to put his golf cups on my drawing-room mantel."

My cry of sympathy brought out the whole dreadful story.

"I didn't mind," she said, "so long as they were in the dining room and the library. They are ugly and useless, but I was willing to sacrifice the appearance of those two rooms to his pride in his skill. But when they were put in my drawing-room—you know my drawing-room!—I cannot and will not stand it."

I do know her drawing-room. It is a perfect room, oval in shape, done in purest Georgian to the least detail. Golf cups on that mantel, flanking the Chelsea figures, the Joseph Hancock candlesticks!

"My dear," I said, "don't do it. I have a plan for you. Stage a burglary. Let the maids go out, leave the pantry window open, pack up the cups and any of your other silver you don't like—wedding presents and such—and neatly remove them. Have them melted down, and take the money and add a couple of pearls to your string. I would recommend hiring a burglar, but if he should be caught—and the police are sometimes quite bright in these little affairs—it would be awkward all round. No; every wife of a golf-trophy husband her own burglar, is my motto. In this way you save lawyer's fees, avert divorce, and rid your house of your pet pests. He can begin all over again with the dining room and library now."

She burst into tears and flung herself on my shoulder. "You have saved me," she sobbed. "I hated to divorce him, I love him devotedly, as you know: but my drawing-room—my drawing-room!"

Imagine the way husbands would be urged to compete if the prizes were good-looking vases, compotes, tea sets, coffee urns, trays, candelabra, cocktail sets! Imagine having a closet full of such things along in June when the wedding invitations begin to come in! "Let me see, Roderick, we'll give Cousin Sarah the bonbon dishes you won at Sleepy Hollow—they don't match the rest of my silver. And we'll send that Miss Jenks, who's going to marry your old college friend, the duplicate tea caddy you won at Manchester."

Oh, wouldn't it be heavenly! There would be no more complaining golf widows. No more would raging golfiacs have to lie to their wives and sneak away from home when there was a match on. Instead, wives would urge their husbands to become experts, and there would be a keen domestic gallery at every match.

No one can seriously urge that the usual sporting prize is an object of beauty or utility.

But, murmurs the chronic objector, the true sportsman does not play for the prize—he plays for the love of the game. To which I can only reply that I see no reason why the true sportsman should therefore be penalized by giving him a hideosity, an inutility, a promoter of domestic discord as a reward of his sportsmanship.

EDITOR'S EASY CHAIR

LONG LIFE OR NOT?

BY EDWARD S. MARTIN

HOW long should we want to live? Someone has put that inquiry to the Easy Chair, suggesting this and that: as how many people have a desire for great age even though it means nothing more than sitting in a chair and passing out without pain; whether it is a reasonable desire; whether it is good in itself to live long; whether it is physical vigor that makes life agreeable and desirable; whether the joy of life is another term for youth. Someone suggests as things proper to hope for, "hard work, as much leisure as our intellectual resources can bear and a quick curtain." What do you think of that? A quick curtain!

Well, let us consider! We see people who dislike all thought of death, do not want to think about it, feel that it is a horror. We notice that some old people get the habit of life so strongly and feel so unequal to any radical change that they seem to prefer to live on through the decay of most of their senses and even in more or less pain. We notice that by common consent it is considered normal and healthy for the young to want to live. That is what they came here for—to live. It is their duty not to shirk it if they can help it. We can agree as to that. Probably most of us can agree that it is everybody's duty to live his life through in so far as he can. Suicide is not well regarded, though excused sometimes when the circumstances are very exceptional. It is instinct to cling to life, a sound instinct, indeed, a pious instinct. There is a kind of trust in God in it.

Then why do so many people end their lives?

Mostly from sickness of some kind, or disappointments in love or business, or loss of money. They get tired out; they lose courage; they have more ill luck than they think they can bear; they have no sustaining religion; their minds break down. Sometimes in cases of incurable disease suicide is a way of escape from a slow and painful death. But long life is traditionally regarded as a blessing. Why should it be? Why should it be thought blessed to linger on, more and more dependent on other people as the physical powers diminish?

One can think of only one reason and that is that while the physical powers are growing less, the spiritual powers may be gaining. There is only one reasonable apology for life anyway and that is that it is evolutionary; a course of training and preparation for something that follows it in an existence detached from our physical bodies and from earth. What we get here, if we get it, is or should be to our advantage when we leave here: not our money, not our possessions, but our training in character, in understanding, probably in all kinds of knowledge and in some kinds of power. For mortals the only solution of the problems of life and death is immortality. Without that they put thumb to nose and wag fingers at you.

There is a joy of life that belongs to youth. We all know about it—the joy that sings and goes forth strong to win a race; the joy so much identified with

the body. Less well known, because so much less commonly experienced, is the joy of age that comes of understanding, the joy of the mind and of the spirit where something speaks to us, where there is an invisible companionship, where the adventures of a lifetime recorded in the subconscious mind become an open book which one may read when nothing else invites him. And there is always the joy of learning; at least there may be in old age, if one does learn and keeps at it. There is vast entertainment for one who has learned some of the laws of life to watch them work, and to search out new ones and try to apply them; and he is especially fortunate if he has come to realize how small is the sum of all he knows, or that any man knows as yet, in comparison with what is still to be discovered. Of that sort are the best joys of age, and with them may be included the simple pleasures of the senses, and beauty in all its forms.

WHAT affair of ours is it when we die? Did we have any choice about coming into this life? Why then choice about leaving it?

We have not much choice. We are spared that. If long life comes to us we are entitled to believe that it comes for our good. The right idea of life is continuation; that death is not a terminal, but no more than an incident; that it is not a crash, but a mere change of cars. We pass out of our physical bodies and proceed in our spiritual bodies—invisible, to be sure, to most mortal eyes though some mediums seem to see them—but bodies not the less, and made of something fit to hold and continue personality, and capable in some cases of extraordinary physical exploits of a sort; and in other cases apparently of communication.

One finds some old people living a good deal in the next life before they die. And one also sees spirituality prolonging life; purifying its desires, diminishing its anxieties; excluding the considerations and the appetites that wear out our mortal frames. There are people who seem to us to be living in two planes of existence at the same time: old people usually who have considerably let go of the world though they still live and work in it, and have partly passed over to the life to come. For such people death is no more than a slight jolt—a very interesting change, but no wise appalling. If one thinks, as so many people do nowadays, that we pass into the beyond precisely as we are, and go on there with the unfinished course we have run here, the terrors of the change are considerably abated. Will it then be indifferent to such people whether they live or die? No! For if it were there would be no point to mundane life. For if people think that they carry out into that life beyond what they have gained on earth, they will wish their gains to be as considerable as possible. If we could be trained to complete advantage in the beyond, why should we be born on Earth? There is a reason why we were born here. The fact that we were born here implies that the life on Earth is to our advantage; that in the school kept here we learn things necessary to our development; for though those things, if we die prematurely, can still be imparted to us and doubtless are, yet the appointed place to get them is here. To get all one can out of life is the right aspiration for us human creatures; to keep at it as long as we can, and work at it as long as we live; not to hurry off into the next plane without the education which we are entitled to get here.

That is the great consideration which enters into any discussion of how long one would wish to live. All he can know is that he should wish to live until his job on earth is completed, until he has gained what for him is attainable here. Guard life then and cherish it, for it is precious while it lasts, and so is health. But surely one should aspire so to live his life as to be always ready to pay it in when occasion of due importance and validity demands it. All philosophers

and most poets agree about that, from Emerson's

> 'Tis man's perdition to be safe,
> When for the truth he ought to die.

to Lovelace, and—

> I could not love thee, dear, so much,
> Loved I not honour more.

And what says the great authority? "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

SO much for long life from the standpoint of the person who lives it. Now as to society. Is it profitable to society that we should live long? The doctors tell us that the duration of life has increased twenty years in the last century and is likely to be increased another twenty years in the century to come. That will about double it. The Milbank Fund in New York proposes to spend two million dollars to increase the longevity of the East Side residents of New York between 14th and 64th Streets. That is a residential strip two miles long and about half a mile wide. How about that? As an experiment it will be interesting, but is it going to be profitable to the city? We have considered the possibility of spiritual profits in old age; how is it on its economic and industrial side? Are the aged going to earn their keep, and if so, how?

Suppose the Milbank Fund produces a much increased proportion of old people in that strip that is to be benefited by its attention; who is going to take care of them? Grandparents may not do as well in flats as they used to do in farm houses. They mean more rent, more food. Are they going to be worth it, and is it going to be possible to provide it for them except at the public expense?

Some of these questions seem rather ominous. The answer we get to them all is that increased longevity is simply an incident of better health in a community, and that better health, of course, is profitable. That is, the same process which provides for an increased number of old people provides also for increased competence in them while they are growing old, increased ability to earn and provide for old age, and increased ability in their children, if they have them, to provide for them. So there is not really anything terrifying in the idea of longer life. One cannot say that it is not economic. If life is good at all, it is worth living through to its natural end. If old age is a penalty of health, it is one worth paying.

There are, of course, those (we always have them with us) who are afraid too many people will be born, and we must expect the same sort of minds to be apprehensive that people will live too long; but those people have not confidence in life nor in the Giver of it. Along with greater age there should come more sense. When a larger proportion of the population is mature, past the age, say, of forty, and ranging from that to eighty, there ought to be an increased capacity in the country for government, for legislation, for all kinds of direction. Older people even now are wiser than young ones. They have a propensity to be mossbacks; not adventurous enough; too apprehensive of the effects of change; but just now hereabouts we hear that the jails and prisons are all crowded—with whom? Old people, mature people? No—with boys, from sixteen up. The hold-up men are mostly scandalously young. They do not know anything yet. Most people do acquire a certain amount of sense just by living. They cannot help but observe and learn.

THERE must be more wisdom in the world to keep up with the increase of knowledge. Knowledge and the powers resulting from it seem just now to be running away with us. What is the cure? Less knowledge? Not at all! More! And part of the cure may be more time to get that knowledge, more time to grow wise. There is nowadays a vast amount of action and of legisla-

tion based on half knowledge. People do not see things as they are. They see them very distorted. They try to cure evils with remedies that make worse evils. Consider the problem of intoxicants and what it will mean when the day comes when we see that problem not through glasses darkly, but in the light of fuller knowledge of man, of his body, his soul, his subconscious mind, and any other properties that he has, if he has any. The problem of intoxicants is quite capable of being solved and handled. The trouble is that people do not know how to do it. Consider the great problem of heresy. What is it? What is right and desirable to believe? All the heresy squabbles would fade away if there were a truer understanding of the subjects they are concerned with.

Of course, any one of us may come to be considerably old without becoming very wise. Take any large community as a whole and the chances are that, if the average duration of life in it is high, it will be more wisely managed than if it is low. The sages ordinarily are old men, detached more or less from the activities of life; comparatively dispassionate. A true sage is very valuable, especially in politics and in religion—which two subjects are much nearer related than people usually appreciate—and the influence of sages and wise old men and women, and even old men and women who are not particularly wise, is quite extraordinary. Whether it is due to the Fifth Commandment or to their having the reins of authority still in their hands, their power in the world is astonishing. As a rule it is a power to hold back, but not always.

Laws and rules of life generally, regulating our habits and behavior and attempting to regulate our beliefs, should reflect not youth alone, or middle age, or old age, but the whole of life including all three. The young are the great doers; the old are the restrainers. They know better than the young what not to do; they know better than the young, or should, the limitations of regulation. They should have learned that good conduct and good character come from within and cannot be secured, though they may be favored, by rules applied from the outside.

Long life in a way saves cost in education. There must be parents who, when they get a child "educated" and started in life, feel that he ought to go on forever, and that nothing less is worth the pains taken and the cost incurred.

Certainly not, and nothing less is offered. Whenever a human creature dies—whether a year old or less, or a hundred years old or more—nothing that had been well done to teach him is wasted. But, of course, all parents prefer that the benefit of teaching should accrue visibly in this mundane life. They feel that when a child has been duly taught they are entitled to get, here and now, the benefit of him, and they will see a better economy in instruction and training that shapes a life for eighty years on earth than one much earlier transplanted. Of course, that is a natural feeling and as far as it goes it helps the economic justification of old age. We want the good and valuable old people to stay on as long as possible. Not all old people seem to us good and profitable, but not only is our judgment about that liable to error, but we shall not get the valuable old people unless human life in general is protracted enough to give an assortment to choose from.

PERSONAL AND OTHERWISE

WE HAVE read many an indictment of American journalism, charging it with venality, obscenity, and other sins; yet most of these attacks have found us lined up unhesitatingly with the defense. Reformers who would have the newspapers suppress all mention of crime, radicals who lament the supposed control of the press by advertisers, usually are better acquainted with their own theories than with journalism. But when a man on the inside, who knows his facts, stands up and speaks his mind concerning the current tendencies of the press, he cannot be so easily dismissed; we must give him an open-minded hearing. The author of "Sell the Papers!" prefers not to be identified, but we may say this much: he is an editorial writer on a well-known Western newspaper.

The preëminence of ***Thomas Hardy*** among living writers in English is so unquestioned that it is an honor to publish his latest poem. The second of June, 1925, will be his eighty-fifth birthday.

In our Short Story Contest we made a rule that no winner of a first prize in any of the competitions would be eligible for later awards. But this rule did not affect the winners of second prizes; it seemed altogether fair that they should have a chance to compete again. Under these conditions ***Charles Caldwell Dobie,*** of San Francisco, emerged the only double winner. "The Hands of the Enemy," which we published last March, and "Wild Geese," which follows Mr. Hardy's poem in this issue, were both awarded second prizes.

The other day we were lunching with a distinguished British novelist. He had just been reading Philip Guedalla's portrait of King Louis XVI. "If there is any other living English writer," said he, "who could have written the last page of that article, I should like to know who he is." If there is any American writer who rivals Mr. Guedalla as a master of the historical portrait it is ***Gamaliel Bradford.*** His technic is utterly different, but with what discriminating fairness and precision he depicts for us the tragic Peggy Shippen! "The Wife of the Traitor," we are happy to announce, marks the return of Mr. Bradford to HARPER'S in a series of four studies of American women, all of them the wives of men either great or notorious. All but one of them (Mrs. Abraham Lincoln) appear to the biographer to be fully their husband's equals, says Mr. Bradford, and yet all four would probably be forgotten by history save for their association with their husbands' careers. Here is a fact for feminists—and others—to ponder over!

To return a moment to the Short Story Contest: differences of opinion among the Judges were the rule rather than the exception, but the difference of opinion with regard to one story was conspicuous. "The Blue Bead," by ***Rose Wilder Lane,*** was ranked first by one Judge in the final competition, who spoke of it as "a very clever picture of an American type, seen through the uncomprehending eyes of a South-East European . . . a thoroughly artistic job;" and was not included at all by the other Judges in the first four stories. Perhaps there will be a similar difference of opinion among HARPER readers. It seems to be Mrs. Lane's lot to provoke disagreement; her remarkable new novel, ***He Was a Man,*** has been enthusiastically praised by some of the ablest reviewers and denounced by others—Laurence Stallings going so far as to say that he detested it. Mrs. Lane knows her Albania, as readers of ***The Peaks of Shala*** will agree, and plans shortly to leave Missouri to return to the Balkans for an indefinite stay.

From Albania to Reno is a seven-thousand mile leap. ***Katharine Fullerton Gerould*** in

her study of the Mecca of the mismated does more than picture for us the metropolis of Nevada: she shows us a new and little-known side of the whole problem of divorce. Mrs. Gerould lives in Princeton, New Jersey.

Heywood Broun, on the other hand, probably could not be induced to live in Princeton, being a Harvard graduate and a confirmed New Yorker. As columnist of the *New York World*, he performs the difficult feat of filling a twelve-hundred-word space six days in the week, and of being always entertaining, usually amusing, and often exceedingly wise. Occasionally he can be induced to write magazine articles in which the entertainment, humor, and wisdom are sustained over a wider space, and he does so this month in his whimsical (yes, Mr. Broun, whimsical) observations upon sportsmanship.

If *Jerome K. Jerome* were an American, he would be cited as one of those who proved the possibilities of American democracy by rising from adversity to success. When he was a little boy his family suffered terrible financial losses, and for years he struggled as clerk, penny-a-liner journalist, schoolteacher, and provincial actor, until *Three Men in a Boat* made him famous. At the age of sixty-five he turns to reminiscence, and tells us some excellent stories of his adventures in the theater, culminating in the triumph of *The Passing of the Third Floor Back*.

Here is a conundrum: if New York gets back from the Federal Government, in subsidies, one cent out of each dollar it contributes, and Nevada gets back two dollars and sixteen cents, what becomes of the Republican and Democratic parties? For an answer which illuminates the whole political problem of to-day consult *Charles Merz's* article. Mr. Merz, one of the editors of the *New York World*, wrote "Congress Invades the White House" in HARPER'S for May.

A new Father Brown detective story by *G. K. Chesterton* and *Ernest Boyd's* article on Charles Dickens (the fifth of an unconventional series by the brilliant Irish-Manhattan critic) are followed by a chapter of muddy Colombian travel in *William McFee's* most delightful vein. Mr. McFee, it will be recalled, was formerly a sea-going engineer and is the author of *Casuals of the Sea*, *Command*, and other excellent books. He now lives at Westport, Connecticut.

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The poets of the month, in addition to Mr. Hardy, are *Lizette Woodworth Reese* of Baltimore, a frequent contributor to HARPER'S whose exquisite verse is represented in many an anthology; *Elinor Wylie* (Mrs. William Rose Benét), whose work as a poet is equalled in distinction by her novel, *Jennifer Lorn;* and *Amy Lowell*, who wrote and championed free verse in the days when free verse was considered radical; and now, after establishing a secure reputation among the outstanding American poets, has written perhaps the ablest and most scholarly of all the biographies of Keats.

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Malcolm Logan, a new contributor who writes us (from New York City) that the news of the acceptance of his manuscript reached him on Friday the thirteenth, which he will hereafter defend from the slanderers who call it a day of ill luck, shares the pages of the Lion's Mouth with *Sophie Kerr Underwood*, former managing editor of the *Woman's Home Companion* and one of the most popular fiction-writers in the country.

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"In Bonnet and Shawl," the painting reproduced on this month's cover, is the work of Irving R. Wiles, one of the foremost American portrait painters. Mr. Wiles was born at Utica in 1861, studied with his father, L. M. Wiles, and later with Chase and Beckwith in New York and Carolus-Duran in Paris. He was elected a member of the National Academy of Design in 1897.

He has won a number of notable prizes, and his figure work, in addition to his portraits, represents him in the City Art Museum, St. Louis; the old City Hall, Brooklyn, New York; Corcoran Gallery, Washington; Military Academy, West Point, New York; and the Metropolitan Museum. In addition to his portrait work, Mr. Wiles has painted many delightful sea studies at his summer residence at Peconic, Long Island.

Not for many months has any HARPER article met with such a response as the Reverend Fred Eastman's "Shall I Remain in the Ministry?" in our March issue. It has been extensively quoted and discussed, both in the lay press and in church periodicals, and Mr. Eastman has been deluged with letters. Shortly after the article appeared he came into the HARPER office bearing a brief case crammed with the first eighty-three of these letters, and reported that they were still coming in so fast that he found it hard to answer them as faithfully as he would like to. They came from every part of the country, mostly from those who faced a problem similar to his; and so far only two, he said, dissented from his argument. Many of the writers sought his advice. There could be no more convincing testimony to the value of such a courageous and penetrating study of the dilemma of the preacher who cares "more for the individual soul than for the institution."

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Whether Mr. Eastman or some other contributor is the Japanese gymnast referred to in the following letter from a missionary in Central America, we have been unable to decide. We print a portion of it word for word, spelling and all:

"I am no desciple of the Papacy, which is looking for the sun of great successes to rise in the West of its past history; nor am I the caustic causist that tries to prove that universal falsehoods are more sacred than divine inspirations themselves; but if I wished to prostrate the sophistical teachings of up-to-date Modernism on his face by a well-directed blow on its multiple-headedness I would not strive to do it by using the Japanese gymnastics."

This rebuke, as may be imagined, prostrates us on our multiple-headed face.

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Her work as a Judge in the Short Story Contest completed, Miss Zona Gale writes us expressing her pleasure and interest in serving, and adds, "It seems to me that you have done a great service in this whole matter, for though only two new writers were brought out, yet this kind of recognition given in general to story-writing dignifies it in a way which is largely overlooked. The difficulties of making out an income tax paper are doubled by the fact that no such animal as a story-writer is allowed for! The service of such a contest seems to me as great in indirect ways as in the concrete values, which are many."

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From a Wisconsin reader comes the following anecdote suggested by Mrs. Gerould's comments in the March issue on the rivalry between Portland, Seattle, and Tacoma:

I was familiar with Seattle both in the days when Washington Hotel sat proudly on its mesa, and in the after-the-war period, when it seemed to me to be so sadly in need of a coat of fresh paint. I am not so sure that even in the earlier days Portland, as a rival, was considered altogether out of the running. In those earlier days when a certain type of revival meeting was more frequent than at the present, a friend of mine, for a number of years an enthusiastic resident of Seattle, was attending a meeting of this sort. The evangelist had just come from conducting a revival in Portland. He was earnestly urging his audience to manifest their desire for a change of heart and a better life by standing. As the response to his impassioned appeal seemed to fall upon reluctant ears, he endeavored to stimulate action by recounting the rewards of his labors in Portland, where penitents crowded each other about the altar, and where the numbers, which he seemed to have carefully tabulated, were such as to arouse civic pride. My friend, who by the way, was a member of the Methodist Church, in good and regular standing—albeit, perhaps not exactly the type of the original followers of John Wesley—stood the inferences as long as she was able. Then standing and turning toward the audience, most of which was behind her, she said in a clear voice, audible throughout the large church,

"Tally one for Seattle! Anything to beat Portland!"